















AN

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF

A B I N G T O N ,

PLYMOUTH COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

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BY AARON HOBART.

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## P R E F A C E .

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Some time ago, the writer, to gratify a curiosity to look back on the past, began, and continued as he had leisure, researches into the history of his native town. At the particular request of several respectable individuals, who have supposed the result of his labors might not be without interest to the inhabitants, he has, with some reluctance, consented to its publication.

A work of this kind must, in the nature of things, be imperfect. In the course of time, many important facts are lost, past recovery. Information derived from individuals, is often incorrect—and records are sometimes false. The aim has been, to use faithfully the materials which have fallen in the writer's way, and though he has no right to boast of perfect accuracy, he hopes not to have committed many or important errors.

The object has been, to collect and preserve facts, which might not only be interesting at the present time, but useful by way of reference hereafter. Whether the selection of these has been judicious, and whether,

in stating them, a proper medium has been observed between too much minuteness of detail, on the one hand, and too great generality on the other, each reader will judge for himself.

The history is respectfully dedicated to the inhabitants of the town, with the wish that they may enjoy all that prosperity and happiness, which results from a cultivated mind, industrious habits, simple manners, pure morals, and religious principle.

EAST BRIDGEWATER, November, 1838.

## ORIGINAL GRANTS OF LAND.

THAT part of Abington, south of the Bridgewater four-mile line,\* was within the first grant to the proprietors of Bridgewater. In 1710, some of the lands towards the northeast corner of that town were laid out into seven shares. The fourth was mostly in Abington. It extended from the four-mile line one mile southerly on the east side of the third share, and was 160 rods wide. Its southeast corner was in East Bridgewater, near Jacob Bates's.

The fifth share, 360 rods long northerly and southerly, lay in Abington, on the east side of the road from the Rev. Mr. Thomas's meetinghouse, by Christopher Dyer's to East Bridgewater. It was divided in 1714 into eight unequal lots, by easterly and westerly lines, from the road to the Bear Meadow lots.

The remainder of the territory, south of the four-mile line, was granted from time to time, and generally in small tracts, to the different proprietors or to purchasers of their rights.

In 1668, an additional grant of *two* miles was made to Bridgewater.† That part of it, without the four-

\* This line runs with the road by Asa Fullerton's, due east a little to the northward of Ephraim S. Jenkins's and near Lebbeus Gurney's, to Scituate.

† This grant gave Bridgewater an extent of 'six miles from the centre on all four sides.' Former grants, however, within the additional grants were

mile line to the north, was divided into what were called the *West shares*, the *Old Men's shares*, and the *Young Men's shares*.

The Old Men's shares lay between the four and six mile line, and extended from a line a mile to the west of the Bridgewater north and south centre line, three miles east, where they did not interfere with prior grants. Their easterly end was in Abington and bounded on the western division of the Young Men's shares and on 'Streams Grant.'

The Young Men's shares, twenty in number, were wholly in Abington. They lay in two divisions. The eastern bounded west on the grant to the four younger sons of Lieut. James Torrey; north 276 rods on the Hatherly grant; east 374 rods on the Scituate line (so called) and south 80 rods, on the four mile line. It was divided by east and west lines in 1700.

The western division bounded west on the Old Men's shares, by a line running due north from the four mile line one mile and a quarter; south on the four mile line and easterly by a line running by 'Goodman Shaw's head line;' 'west northwest or thereabout,' to Shaw's westerly corner, bounds 'about 4 poles from the Old Men's shares line, and from thence north northeast by Shaw's line, three quarters of a mile or thereabout, unto Shaw's northerly corner, and from

not to be disturbed, though to 'belong to the township of Bridgewater.' A line running east six miles from the Bridgewater north and south centre line, would probably reach the west line of Scituate, and therefore all that part of Abington south of the six mile line, was at the incorporation of the town, part of Bridgewater. This line, now the north boundary line of North Bridgewater against the Belcher grant in Abington, would, if continued due east, run near deacon Richard Vining's, Zelotes Beals's and Harvey Torrey's.

thence east southeast 12 poles unto John Richards's line, and from thence north northeast by John Richards's,' to

1642. The Colony granted to 'Nathaniel Souther\* a farm land, with competent meadowing in some convenient place, so that it do not much prejudice a plantation.' James Lovell, of Weymouth, having purchased for himself and Andrew Ford, Souther's title, this grant containing 200 acres was laid out to him, on the west side of the Hatherly grant, running in Hatherly's range 200 rods nearly south, and 160 rods nearly west.

In 1679, Lovell conveyed to Ford half of this tract, describing it as laying 'by the road that goeth from Weymouth to Bridgewater, bounded upon a tract of land now in the possession of several of the inhabitants of Hingham, which is in the possession and hath been ever since it was laid out, of said Ford, and is known and called by the name of *Ford's Farm*.'†

1654. The court 'in regard to sundry contentions and entanglements between Mr. Timothy Hatherly‡ and some of the inhabitants of Scituate, granted unto

\* Nathaniel Souther or Southworth was the first Secretary of Plymouth colony.

† The first settlement of the town was undoubtedly on this grant. The colony tax in 1682, was £244 11s. 4d., of which 15 shillings were assessed on the inhabitants of 'Ford's Farms.' In 1690, the Colony ordered £1350 to be raised to pay debts incurred on account of the expedition to Canada: of this sum £3 were assessed 'on the lands above Weymouth, viz. the lands called Ford's Farm, and parts adjacent.'

‡ Mr. Hatherly was one of the principal settlers, and a very generous benefactor of the town of Scituate. For a long time, he was an important member of the government, having been as assistant thirteen years—treasurer of the Colony, and a commissioner of the United Colonies. He was honorably distinguished as the friend of religious toleration, and the firm opponent of all those severe and oppressive laws, made by the Colony against the Quakers. He died 1667.

Mr. Hatherly to satisfy the partners at Conahasset, a certain competency of land out of the bounds of any township, on the westerly side of the town of Scituate.’

1656. This grant was more particularly described as ‘a tract of land to begin at Accord Pond on the southerly side, and to run three miles southerly towards Indian Head River Pond; and to be laid out three miles square’ on the west line of Scituate. As the north line of this grant, if run at a right angle with the east, would soon reach and cross the Colony line, the Court in 1671 ordered it to be run from the south side of the pond, so far south of west, as to avoid the Patent line until it come to its western termination, thus leaving a long strip of land in the form of what was called a *Gussett*, between the grant and the Colony line.

This grant in 1672, was divided into forty shares, thirty and one half of which then belonged to John Jacob, Edward Wilder, John Thaxter, and Matthew Cushing of Hingham, and John Otis of Scituate,\* and nine and one-half to Thomas Andrews and Jeremiah Beal and others. These companies then made partition, into three lots by two north and south lines parallel with each other and with the West line of Scituate. The eastern and western lots, the former 240 rods and the latter 492 wide, were assigned to Jacob & Company, and the middle lot 228 rods wide to Andrews & Company.

In 1699, the proprietors of the Eastern and Western lots, divided by east and west lines, to hold in severalty.

\* These individuals in 1663, bought twenty-three of these shares of Hatherly, for £69.

The eastern into two divisions, the first lying on the southerly end into five lots, each 64 rods wide, and the second into five lots 128 rods wide. The western\* into two divisions of five lots each, all 96 rods wide.

The proprietors of the middle lot, commonly called the small shares, divided by lines north and south, probably to give each owner a portion of cedar swamp.

The southwest corner of the Hatherly grant was at a corner now between Jacob Reed's and Seth Pratt's land, in the side line of Daniel A. Ford's.

1664. The Court 'in reference unto the request of Phineas Pratt,† and the Elder Bates in the behalf of

\* The first lot in the first division at the southerly end of the western division, was set off to Daniel and Theophilus Cushing, in the right of John Thaxter; second, to Jabez and Thomas Wilder, sons of Isaac Wilder, deceased, in right of Edward Wilder; third, to Stephen French, in right of John Otis; fourth, to Matthew Cushing, the only surviving original partner; fifth, to David Jacob, in right of his father John Jacob. The first lot in the second division to Daniel and Theophilus Cushing; second to David Jacob; third, to Jabez and Thomas Wilder; fourth, to Stephen French; fifth, to Matthew Cushing.

† Phineas Pratt came over in the Ann, in 1623. Soon after he visited Weston's plantation, at Wessagussett, (now Weymouth,) and there became acquainted with a conspiracy of the Massachusetts and Cape Indians to destroy that settlement. Being much alarmed for its fate, he took his pack on his back, and set off for Plymouth, to give information of the danger. As he was not well acquainted with the way, he missed the direct path, but fortunately for him thus saved his life, as he was followed by two Indians, who intended to kill him. Immediately after his arrival, the Plymouth company despatched Capt. Standish and eight men, with orders to protect the settlement, and it being 'impossible to deal with the Indians upon open defiance,' 'to take them in such traps as they lay for others.' Standish and his party proceeded very cautiously, but finding it necessary, finally attacked and killed seven Indians, and in obedience to orders brought the head of one of them, Witawamut, 'a bold and bloody villian,' and a chief conspirator, to Plymouth, where it was by way of terror set on the fort.

Pratt and Briggs are in this grant called purchasers or old comers. This may need explanation. The Leyden Company of Pilgrims, before they embarked for this country, formed a partnership in trade with certain London merchants, commonly called merchant adventurers. The connection was to continue for seven years, at the end of which time all the common property



the children of Clement Briggs, that whereas they the said Phineas Pratt and Clement Briggs have not had their proportion of land with others, formerly called purchasers, or old comers, that they may have some consideration of land in that respect, in a parcel or tract of land lying near unto the line betwixt the Plymouth and Massachusetts jurisdiction, and near unto Weymouth, doth grant unto the said Phineas Pratt and unto two of the said Clement Briggs, his sons, viz. David Briggs and Remember Briggs, three hundred and fifty acres of the said lands, viz. unto the said Phineas Pratt two parts of the said three hundred and fifty acres, and the remainder thereof unto the two sons of the said Clement Briggs,' the grantees to pay the cost of extinguishing the Indian title. This grant was laid out 'at the path that led from Weymouth to Bridgewater,' 'a little brook (that by Jacob Bicknell's) running through the same.' Pratt, in 1672, then of Charlestown, sold his part of the grant, 232 acres, to John Shaw of Weymouth, for £35. Shaw conveyed it to his three sons, John, Nicholas, and Joseph, and they, in 1705, to Wil-

was to be divided. In 1626, the Colony bought out the interest of the adventurers for £1800. Soon after, the Colony hired to Gov. Bradford and his eight associates, the trade of the Colony for six years, they on their part undertaking to pay therefor the £1800 to the adventurers, and all the other debts of the Company, amounting to £600 more, and also bring over yearly £50 in hoes and shoes, and to sell corn for six shillings a bushel. Those who engaged in this contract were called Purchasers. The old comers were certain of those who came over in the three first vessels, viz. the *Mayflower*, the *Fortune*, and the *Ann*. When, in 1640, Gov. Bradford, in whose name the Patent from the Plymouth Company in England had been taken out, surrendered that Instrument to the 'Body of freemen,' three large tracts of land, the first comprehending Eastham, Orleans, and Brewster, in the County of Barnstable, second, a part of New Bedford and Dartmouth, in the County of Bristol, and the third, Swansea and Rehoboth, in the same County, and Barrington, Warren, and perhaps Bristol, in Rhode Island, were, in the surrender, reserved to these purchasers or old comers. They were in all 58.

liam Tirrill, senior. It bounded easterly on the grant to the Briggs's, southerly on the 4 mile line, westerly on the western division of the Young Men's shares, and northerly on the 120 acre grant to Lieut. John Holbrook.

Remember Briggs, of Weymouth,\* who had probably bought his brother David's share, in 1687 sold their part, 116 acres, with 12 acres of 'swampy land granted by the court in 1668,' to Caleb and Samuel Chard. This land was between Pratt's land and the land granted to the sons of Lieut. Torrey.

1665. There was granted to Phineas Pratt and James Lovell, 'about four or five acres of meadow, or such swampy ground as tendeth towards meadow, laying on the westerly side of Phineas Pratt's land, that was granted unto him the last Court.'

1665. There was granted to Cornet Robert Stetson, of Scituate,† two hundred acres of land on the south side of Hatherly's grant. The tract was laid out in 1667, and was bounded 'on the North by those lands granted at Accord Pond—on the East by the line of the Town of Scituate, until it crosses a deep, still brook; and so again from the town's line as Mr. Hatherly's land runs westerly, until it crosses the said brook there again,

\* He was of Taunton, 1694.

† Cornet Stetson was an enterprising and useful man in his day. He was many years a deputy from Scituate—a Commissioner in 1664 to run the line between the Plymouth and Massachusetts Colonies, and a member of the board of war. In 1658, the Colony ordered a Troop of Horse to be raised, a certain number from each town, who were to 'be freed from foot service, watching and warding and their horses rate free.' The officers were William Bradford, Captain, John Freeman, Lieutenant, and Robert Stetson, Cornet.—The company was disbanded in 1675, for refusing to procure carbines and serve as a troop of Dragoons. He died 1702, aged 90.

with all the spots and holes of meadow, that are within said bounds.’

1665. ‘In reference unto the request of the King’s Commissioners, in the behalf of Lieut. Peregrine White, desiring that the Court would accommodate him with a portion of land, in respect that he was the first of the English that was born in these parts, and in answer unto his own petition preferred unto this Court respecting the premises, the Court have granted unto him Two Hundred acres of land lying and being at the path, that goes from Bridgewater to the Bay, adjoining the Bay line.’\*

1665. Two Hundred acres of land were granted ‘unto the four younger sons of Lieut. James Torrey, (of Scituate,) lying above Weymouth, near unto the line of the Massachusetts, to be at the disposal of Capt. William Torrey, for the good of said children.’ According to the return of the laying out, the boundaries of this grant began ‘at a stake and stones in an angle made by the 4 mile line of Bridgewater, and the side line of Briggs’ land,’ (about twenty rods to the westward of the Country road,) thence running north east

\* This grant is now in North Bridgewater. It adjoins the Beleher grant in Abington, and its easterly line is now the boundary in that direction between the two towns. The extent of it was for many years the subject of bitter controversy, between the owners and the Province and claimants under the Province. In 1722, Col. Samuel Thaxter, of Hingham, Robert Spurr, of Dorchester, and John Quincy, of Braintree, were appointed by the General Court to sell what was considered Province land, on the gore between the Bridgewater 6 mile, and the Colony line. In their attempts to make the necessary previous surveys, they were so resisted by force by the owners of the White grant, as to be unable to proceed. The Legislature, on receiving their report, caused the offenders to be arrested, and imprisoned in the Gaol at Boston.—After a short detention, they were released upon acknowledging ‘their great fault and offence in resisting and obstructing the Committee,’ and ‘paying the charge and damages occasioned by their misdemeanor.’

240 rods—160 in Briggs' range to a corner tree, thence south east 'for the most part through a swamp,' to the 4 mile line, at a point distant 80 rods from the Scituate line, (so called,) then west on that line to the first bounds. William Reed, Samuel Porter, Nicholas Porter, John Reed and Jacob Reed, of Abington, and Thomas Beal, of Hingham, owned this land in 1714, and then divided—the upland on the east side (of the mill pond meadow) into 5 lots, running east to the Young Men's shares—the upland west of the meadow into 2 and the meadow into 8 lots—each meadow owner agreeing to maintain his share of fence around the meadow.

1668. The Court 'in reference unto a deed surrendered into court by Lieut. John Holbrook of Weymouth, made and given by Josiah Wampatucke and Webconet unto Sergeant Thomas Streame, for the lease of a certain tract of land, for the gratification of the said Lieut. Holbrook, and in reference unto his free acknowledgement thereof, hath granted unto him one hundred and twenty acres of land.' Holbrook sold to John Lothrop, and he, in 1671, to Dea. Thomas Dyer, of Weymouth. The land bounded east on the Hatherly grant and some waste land, and southerly on the grant to Pratt.

1668. Mr. Constant Southworth of Duxbury, and Cornet Stetson of Scituate, acting for the Colony, for £23, conveyed to Lieut. John Holbrook, James Lovell, and Andrew Ford, of Weymouth, 'a certain tract of land containing two miles upon the said line, (the colony line,) beginning at a heap of stones lying at the path going to Bridgewater from Weymouth, and to extend three quarters of a mile from the said line, southerly—provided the said bounds do not entrench upon the land

of John Hammond, (or Hanmer,) which in case it doth, then it is to be supplied in some other place adjoining the said tract of land.' It was afterwards found, that the grant did include land before conveyed, and there was therefore added to it all the land easterly between it and Hatherly's Grant, and another parcel of land on the west of that grant, and north of Ford's farm.— This grant was divided in 1695. From the Colony line, a south southeast line was run through the middle of the tract so as to cut it into two equal parts. Each part was then divided into five unequal lots, by parallel lines running from the centre line, easterly and westerly, and one lot in each, but in a reversed order, was assigned to the several proprietors, according to their respective interest.

1669. The Court confirmed a sale by their agents, Maj. Josiah Winslow and Mr. Constant Southworth, to Cornet Robert Stetson, of a tract of land, more or less, 'bounded towards the north to the three miles square granted to Mr. Hatherly by Accord Pond, towards the south to a white oak tree, marked on the north side R. S. and from the tree through the land to the utmost extent of the purchase made by Cornet Stetson of Josias, and bounded towards the east, to the land given Cornet Stetson by the Court.'

1671. The Court confirmed a sale made by the same agents to Joseph Barstow and Joseph Silvester, (of Scituate,) of 'a parcel of upland, be it more or less, lying and being on the westward side of Scituate bounds, and is bounded on the north with the bound tree of Cornet Stetson, which is marked R. S. and the rocks by the brook that bounds the Cornet's land, and so



ranging southerly until it meets with three black oak trees and one stump, marked J. B. J. S., and from thence west to the utmost extent of the land purchased by Cornet Stetson, and from the three trees southeast to the brook, only there is excepted out of the aforesaid sale, fifty acres contained within the aforesaid bounds granted by the Court to William Barstow, deceased, for services done for the country.' Barstow and Joseph Silvester, son of the Court's grantee, divided, 1693.

1671. The Court confirmed a sale, also made by the same agents, to Joseph Barstow, and Moses and Aaron Simmons, of Scituate, for £8, of 'a parcel of upland, more or less, lying and being on the westward side of Scituate town bounds, and bounded on the north with the lands of Joseph Silvester and Joseph Barstow, extending itself southerly to the utmost extent of the purchase made by Cornet Robert Stetson, for the use of the Colony, and westerly to the utmost extent of said purchase.' In a deed of one-third of this tract by Joseph Barstow to John Cushing of Scituate, in 1694, it is described as running south from Barstow's other land on the west line of Scituate, one mile and a half, 'to a corner marked white oak tree, about two feet over,' thence westerly two miles to a stake and stones on the westerly side of Poor-meadow river; thence north about a mile and a half to Barstow's land, and thence east with his land two miles to the line of Scituate. This and the two preceding grants, were doubtless made before the additional grant to Bridgewater, as otherwise they would have been embraced in that grant.

1671. There was granted to Ensign Mark Eames,

of Marshfield, 'a certain piece of land in the form of a *gusset*, lying next to Accord Pond, between the land there granted to Mr. Hatherly, and the patent line, be it an hundred acres, more or less.' John Jacob having for himself and partners in the Hatherly grant, purchased this *gusset*, it was annexed to that grant, and that part of it within the extended lines of the middle lot was, in the division of that grant, conveyed to Andrews & Company.

1727. Paul Dudley and others, a Committee of the Court, sold to Robert Howard, Ephraim Fobes, and Joseph Snell, for £200, all that part of the gore between the 6 mile and Colony line, lying westerly of the highway from Bridgewater to Braintree, (now Randolph.)

1730. The Province 'in further consideration of the services' of Gov. Belcher as their agent in England, granted him 800 acres of land. 328 acres, part of the grant, were laid out to him in Abington, on the gore. It bounded northerly 'on the Colony line,' 'westerly on the land called Peregrine White's grant,' southerly on the 'Bridgewater 6 mile line,' and 'easterly on a line about twenty-five rods west from a brook called Beaver-brook, home to the Colony line.'

1764. The General Court confirmed to Andrew Belcher, of Milton, 'one hundred and fifty-two acres and one hundred and six rods of land, being part of a gore of Province land, lying within or adjoining to the town of Abington,' 'to compleat a grant to him of two thousand acres.'

Beside the above grants, there was probably one to a John Hammond, (or Hanmer,) north of the 6 mile line and west of Ford's farm. There was also a grant



of meadow to James Lovell and Andrew Ford.—  
 ‘ Thomas Pratt, an inhabitant of Bridgewater Ford’s  
 farm,’ (so called,) 1694, conveyed ‘ all his own quarter  
 part of that swamp or meadowish ground granted by Ply-  
 mouth Court to Andrew Ford formerly, and James Lov-  
 ell, which is called by the name of Streame’s\* meadow,  
 as yet undivided, and is about half a mile from Nicholas  
 Shaw’s.’

\* This meadow may, possibly, have been part of the land, which, in the  
 grant to Lieut. Holbrook it was said, had been leased by the Indians to Ser-  
 geant Thomas Streame; and it may have derived its name from that circum-  
 stance. It does not appear that there was any Court grant to any person of  
 that name.

## INDIAN TITLE.

OUR ancestors always acknowledged an Indian title to the soil, which they were bound to extinguish. The character of that title has never been very precisely defined. It seems, however, not to have been a right of exclusive dominion and property, and little else than a privilege of free fishing, trapping and hunting, and a right to the undisturbed enjoyment of their actual possessions. This title, individuals could not receive from the Indians by way of gift;\* nor could it be extinguished, except by the Government, or persons acting under its authority, by purchase from the Indian chiefs, within whose limits the lands lay.

The following extract from the Plymouth Colony records shows, that the northerly part of Plymouth County was within the dominions of *Chickatabut*, a sachem whose residence was sometimes at Neponset river, near Squantum, and sometimes near the Indian Ponds, in Pembroke.

\* The Plymouth Colony records state, that Thomas Joy, of Hingham, 'had caused great disturbance by producing a deed of gift of lands to him, from an Indian sachem, whereby he had broken a law of the colony.' For this offence, Joy was committed to jail, but was discharged on disclaiming any title to the lands, and surrendering his deed to the Court. This Joy was probably the same person mentioned in Winthrop's Journal, as having been put in irons (a sample of the tyranny of those times) for merely circulating a remonstrance to the government in England against certain obnoxious proceedings of the government at Boston; and enquiring of the Marshall, when he went to search 'Dand's study, if his warrant was in the King's name.' Savage says he moved from Boston to Hingham. He died 1678.

1650. Several Indians named in the records, ‘came into court and affirmed, that Chickatabut, his bounds did extend from Nisamagogwanet, near Duxbury mill, unto Tightacut, near Taunton, and to Nunkatatest, which is the head of Charles river. This they do all solemnly affirm—saying God knoweth it to be true, and knoweth their hearts. Dated the first of the fourth month, 1650.

Witness :                    INCREASE NOWELL,  
                                     JOHN ELIOT,  
                                     JOHN HOARE.\*

In 1667, Josias Chickatabut, alias Wampatucke, acknowledged in Court, that he had sold to Lieut. Peregrine White his right in the two hundred acres granted to him.\*

It is not known when the Indian right to the *Three miles square* was extinguished ; but that it was, appears from the recorded acknowledgment of Josias Wampatucke. In 1668, he ‘come into court and owned, that the *Three miles square*, which was granted to Mr. Hatherly, that he had sold it to Mr. Hatherly, and was by him fully satisfied for it.’

The title to the lands granted to Robert Stetson, Joseph Barstow and Joseph Silvester, and to Moses and Aaron Simmons, was acquired of the Indians, before these grants were made. ‘*Josias Chickatabut, of Noma-sakeset, in the government of New Plymouth,*’ 13th April, 1668, conveyed to Cornet Robert Stetson, for

\* Within the bounds of this grant, two rivers are mentioned in the Indian deed—one called *Manamacknæg* and the other *Shumacastasaut*. These names on the lithographic map of Abington, published in 1830, are erroneously applied to *Beaver-brook*, and the upper part of *Poor Meadow*, or *Hersey's River*.

the use of the Colony, 'a certain tract, or parcel of land, by the Indians commonly called *Nanumackewit*, bounded on the north by the lands formerly granted to Mr. Hatherly, and is to run by his line two miles west into the woods—and on the east is bounded by the line of the town of Scituate, and is to run three miles southerly from Mr. Hatherly's said grant, upon the town's line—and so again two miles westerly upon Mr. Hatherly's line upon the other side, and three miles again northerly\* to meet with the first line.'

† Nathaniel Thomas run out this grant in 1685. The line against Scituate run from the Hatherly grant three miles south, 'crossing Indian head-river on the brow of a hill near beaver-dam' to the south-east corner, where stood 'a white oak tree about two feet over.' From thence the line run 'west nine degrees south,' to the south-west corner, about sixty rods westerly of Poor Meadow river. The north-west corner was about twenty rods to the northward of the road by Joseph Wilkes', a little easterly of his house.

There is evidence, that the Indian title to the land granted to Holbrook, Lovell and Ford, was bought out; and it was probably so, in regard to all the other colony grants to individuals.

The Indian right to the territory south of the four-mile line, and to such of it, between that and the six-mile line, as had not been sold by the Colony, before the additional two mile grant to Bridgewater, was extinguished by the proprietors of that town.

\* This north line is in the south part of the town, called, the *Scituate line*—probably because it was parallel with the west line of Scituate, and also because it was the boundary line of grants to Scituate people.

## ROADS.

BEFORE the incorporation of the town, two county roads were laid out through the territory composing it. The first, the road now leading from East Bridgewater by Jacob Harden's, and the Centre Meeting house, to Weymouth, was laid out in 1690, as part of a way from 'Middleborough, Bridgewater and other places, towards Boston.' It began 'at the Woods in Middleborough, by the new meeting house.' In Bridgewater it passed by James Latham's, Byram's plain, thence to the way that led to Weymouth, and thence with that way, and '*on the westerly side of Andrew Ford's house*, to the Patent line.'

The other was the road from Hanson, through the *Back street*, (so called,) to Weymouth. In 1707, the General Sessions of the Peace appointed a Committee to view a way petitioned for from Plymouth to Weymouth. They reported in favor of a way 'from the road which led from Plymouth to John Bradford, Jr.'s, a little to the eastward of said Bradford's house, and thence in the way lately made on the westward side of the Indian head-river Pond, and thence over Col. Thomas's mill-dam, and thence in the way that leads from Little Comfort to Lieut. Nash's, in Weymouth, near a mile to northward of Lieut. Hersey's saw-mill.' In 1712, the road was laid out forty-feet wide. It be-

gan 'at the patent line, upon the road that led from Weymouth to Little Comfort,' and run with that road 'to the westerly corner of French's hill, *easterly from Ford's*—thence to 'bottle hill,' and 'over an old bridge, near a place called Gurney's meadow'—thence by marked trees, 'to Drinkwater path,' &c. &c.

## NOTICE OF SETTLERS BEFORE THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN.

THE first settlement, there is very little doubt, was, as has been before stated, on the grant to Souther ; and the first settlers the family of Ford. Andrew Ford, the son of Andrew and Eleanor Ford, of Weymouth, is said to have been in possession of what was for many years called *Ford's Farms*, or *Ford's Farm*, in 1679. In 1683, his father and James Lovell sold him land, describing him in the deed, as an 'inhabitant of the colony of New Plymouth.' Andrew, junior, had a brother Ebenezer, who was at this place the same year. The Colony records state, that 'at a court of Assistants, July, 1683, Ebenezer Ford, residing at a place called Ford's farm, complains against James Ford, now or late of the same place, in a plea of debt.' Samuel Ford, another brother, was also there, the same year. Nicholas Byram, 14th July, 1683, sold land to 'Samuel Ford, dwelling at a place called Ford's farm.' Samuel returned to Weymouth, and died there, 1711.

Andrew Ford, senior, of Abington, lived in a house that stood a few rods from Joseph Cleverly's. He died 24th August, 1725, leaving a will, in which he mentions his wife Abiah—son Andrew, (Ens.) daughters Sarah Josselyn, 'Thankful Hersey, Lydia Whitmarsh and Abiah Hersey ; also his grandsons Jacob and Andrew,



sons of his son Andrew ; and Hezekiah and Ruth, children of his son Hezekiah, deceased. His 'homestead, or home-living,' he gave his grandson Hezekiah.

Thomas Josselyn was here in 1686, as appears by the following from Plymouth Colony records: 'July, 1686, Isaac Howland, of Middleborough, Plaintiff against Thomas Josselyn, within *the Constablewrick of Little Comfort*,\* Defendant, in an action of debt.'

Caleb Chard came in probably some years before 1694. The proprietors of Bridgewater then laid out land 'on the easterly side of the way, that goeth to *Shaw's farm and Chard's*.' He was the son of William Chard, of Weymouth, who was for many years the town clerk there, and 'a settled school-master.' His wife was Eleanor Waters, by whom he had Thomas, who married Ruth Jackson. He died 1709.

Nicholas Shaw, the son of John and Alice Shaw, of Weymouth, in a deed from John Andrews to Joseph Lincoln, of Hingham, of a part of the grant to Souther, 1694, is said to have lived 'about half a mile from Streame's meadow.' By his wife Deborah, he had Nicholas, Joshua, (Dea.,) John, Zachariah, Benjamin and Sarah, borne between 1689 and 1704, inclusive.

Philip Reed came from Weymouth as early as 1696. Land was laid out that year, to John Porter, 'that laid beyond Snell's plain, *towards Philip Reed's house*.' This house was near where David Gurney now lives.

\* *Little Comfort* was a name given the southerly part of the town. At this time Bridgewater was divided into Constablewricks, and this part of the town formed one. As it was necessary to provide for the service of legal process, north of the six-mile line, the Colony Court, 11th Feb. 1691, ordered 'the lands between Bridgewater and Weymouth, called Ford's farm, and the parts adjacent, to be put under the Constablewrick of Bridgewater.'

In his will, made 1710, and witnessed by William, John and Jacob Reed, his wife Abigail, daughters Mary and Hannah, by a former wife, and son Stephen, are mentioned. He died May 11, 1712.

Joseph Josselyn, if the son of Thomas before named, probably came with his father. In 1696, land was laid out to him 'joining his land at his and Porter's saw-mill.' His house was a few rods back of Jonathan L. Reed's. He died 5th Sept. 1726. His will mentions sons Joseph, Ebenezer and Abraham, and daughters Mary Bates, Sarah Porter,\* Hannah and Beatrice, and his second wife Sarah, the daughter of Andrew Ford.

William Dyer was from Weymouth before 1699. In March of that year Bridgewater appointed him a surveyor of highways. How long he was in Abington is not known. He was there in 1716, but had returned to Weymouth before 1735, for in that year certain persons by order of the proprietors of Bridgewater, 'surveyed the lands of William Dyer, formerly of Abington, now of Weymouth, all which lands lay in Abington, within the eight-miles square of the purchasers of Bridgewater, and where Christopher Dyer now dwells.' Christopher was probably the son of William. He married Hannah, the daughter of Ens. James Nash, by whom he had between 1726 and 1743, Mary, Hannah, Christopher, Sarah, Jacob, Betty and James. He died suddenly in a field back of his house, 11th Aug. 1786, in the eighty-fifth year of his age. It is stated on the

\* There is a family tradition, that as Sarah was one day, in summer, milking one of her father's cows, a thunder cloud came up, and a flash of lightning killed the cow instantly, and knocked out the bottom of her pail, without doing her the slightest injury. She was afterwards the mother of fifteen children.

map of the town, that he was the first child born in it. This is probably a mistake, as there were several families on its territory, many years before his birth.

Samuel Gurney was warned out of town in 1694, by order of the selectmen of Bridgewater. He probably lived in the Back-street, (so called.) His will, made 17th July, 1717, mentions his wife Sarah, (to whom he gives 'all his house and lands in Abington,') brother John, and son-in-law Samuel Staples.

William Tirrell, from Weymouth, bought the whole of the Pratt grant of the sons of John Shaw, 3d March, 1705, and probably settled on it soon after. He lived near Prince Penniman's. In his will, made 27th April, 1727, he mentions his wife Abigail, sons William (Capt., born 1683,) Samuel, Gideon and Thomas, and daughters Abigail Hersey, Thankful Gillmore, Rachel Lincoln and Hannah Shaw. He died 27th of the next October. Formerly, the male branch of this family in town was very numerous, but is now nearly extinct.

Edmund Jackson, second town clerk, came in before 1707. By his wife Mary, he had Samuel, Edmund, Mary, Elizabeth, Sarah and Martha, between 1691 and 1713. There are none of the male branch of this family in Abington at the present day.

William Hersey, (Cornet and Capt.) from Hingham, is described as an inhabitant of Bridgewater early in 1707. His house was on the hill between Dr. Champney's and Hersey's river, so called after him. He had a son William—and probably, Stephen, (Ens.) Joseph, (Capt.) Elisha, (Capt.) and John, were his sons. Whether he died in Abington or returned to Hingham, is not known.

William Reed, (Capt. and first town clerk,) John Reed and Jacob Reed, brothers, and sons of William and Esther Reed, of Weymouth, settled in Abington about 1708. William lived where Ephraim S. Jenkins lives. His wife was Alice, the daughter of Lieut. Jacob Nash, of Weymouth. By her he had Obadiah, (Capt.) Ebenezer, Daniel, James, *Solomon*, Moses and Alice, between 1707 and 1725. He died 1753.\*

John Reed lived opposite the Burying-ground, in the south part of the town. By his first wife, Sarah, he had John, born 1713. By Mary, his second, James, Joseph, Mary, Ezekiel, Peter, Squire and Samuel, between 1716 and 1732. In a division of his estate, 1739, all these children are named.

Jacob Reed, (town clerk nineteen years,) by his first wife, Sarah Hersey, had Sarah, Jacob, Hannah, William and Elijah, between 1718 and 1728. By his second, the widow Hannah Noyes, Betty, born 1734. His house was near Ephraim Whitman's. He died 1766, aged seventy-four.

Ebenezer Whitmarsh, (Dea.) and family, were probably in Abington, some years before 1712. In his will, made 2d July, 1716, he mentions his wife, Christiana, sons Richard, Ebenezer and Thomas, and daughters Ruth Ford and Mary Reed. He was the son of John ✓ Whitmarsh of Weymouth, who was one of the 'select

\* Mr. Dodge, in his Journal, 3d June, 1753, says :—' Attended the funeral of the aged Capt. Reed, the largest I have ever seen in town.' Ten at least of his descendants in the male line, have been liberally educated. Of these, two have been members of Congress, viz. his grandson, the late Rev Dr. John Reed, of West Bridgewater, and *his* son, the Hon. John Reed, of Yarmouth, now a member. After the expiration of his present term, he will have been in Congress twenty-two years—eighteen in succession.

town's men, and town measurer ;' was born May 14th, 1658, and died April 8, 1718.

Nicholas Porter was an appraiser of Caleb Chard's estate in 1709—lived where Sherebiah Cortshell lives. His children by his wife Bathsheba, were Nicholas, William, Bathsheba, Daniel, Susanna, Job, Esther and Abner, born between 1700 and 1718. His second wife was Sarah, the widow of Nicholas Noyes.

John Harden. 22d Feb. 1711, Mr. Niles, of Braintree, records the baptism of 'Jane Harden, the daughter of John Harden, of *Little Comfort*.' Harden's house was where his great grandson Jacob Harden now lives, near the line of East Bridgewater. His will, made 17th Sept. 1751, mentions his daughters Mary Hobart, Sarah Gurney, Jane Spear, Rebecca Noyes, Lydia Dawes, son John, (Capt.) and grandson, Benjamin Gurney, by his daughter Elizabeth.

✓ James Nash, (Ens.) first town treasurer, was son of Lieut. Jacob Nash, of Weymouth, who was a freeman in 1666, and Representative in 1689 and 1690, and grandson of James Nash. He lived where the late Nathaniel Nash lived. By his first wife, Hannah, he had James, Peter and Hannah. By Experience, his second, Experience, Mary, Sarah, Abigail, Samuel and Silence. He died 27th August, 1725.

Edward Bates, Dea. (in the early records the name was generally written Bate,) was the son of Edward and Elizabeth Bates, and grandson of Edward and Susan Bates, of Weymouth. He had three brothers, Ebenezer, Benjamin and Eleazer, who came and settled in Abington. As he was elected to office at the first town meeting, he was probably here before the incor-

poration of the town. Whether the others were, is unknown, though probably not. By his wife, Silence Richards, of Weymouth, he had Edward, Peter, Silence, Samuel and Daniel. House near Oliver Blanchard's. He died 28th Feb. 1740.

Joseph Lincoln, from Hingham, was an original church member and a town officer at the first meeting. In 1723, he was 'ejected' from his office of deacon of the church, on account of some 'irregularities unseemly to such a post;' but 'was restored to charity as a brother,' on confessing that he had 'acted imprudently and unjustly in buying Mr. Tirrill's place under color, to keep off the sheriff from attaching it, and furthermore acknowledging, that he had wronged and injured the truth.' By his wife, Kesiah, he had two children, Prudence and Jonathan.

Samuel Pool, Esq. came about 1711, and settled where James Reed now lives—was the son of Joseph Pool, of Weymouth, and had brothers Joseph and Isaac. By his wife, Sarah, the daughter of Lieut. Jacob Nash, of Weymouth, he had Elizabeth, Samuel, (Dea.) Joseph and Sarah, between 1711 and 1718.

Samuel Porter, brother of Nicholas, before mentioned, bought of Daniel Axtell, his farm in Abington, consisting of a dwelling house, and half of the grant to the Briggs' 30th January, 1712. His wife was Mary, the daughter of Lieut. Jacob Nash, of Weymouth, by whom he had between 1699 and 1719, Samuel, Mary, Jacob, David, Hannah, *John* and Abigail. He died 31st Aug. 1725. All the above children are named in his will. He was the grandfather of the late Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Porter, of Roxbury.



There were doubtless several others, beside those mentioned, who came in before the town was incorporated—among them might be Nicholas Noyes, the father of the late Dea. John Noyes, Samuel Noyes, the father of the late Capt. Daniel Noyes, and Dea. Samuel French.



## INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN AND SUBSEQUENT LOSSES OF TERRITORY.

A petition for an act of incorporation was presented to the General Court, 4th July, 1706—on which an order passed, directing the petitioners to return a plat of the territory described in their petition. Afterwards, another order required ‘The proprietors, purchasers and inhabitants, to take care to make a subscription of what they were capable and willing to pay annually for the support of an able, learned and orthodox minister, and present the same to the court at their next session, when the court would proceed to consider of what was prayed for their encouragement.’ No further steps in the matter appear to have been taken at that time, probably because the means of the people were not deemed sufficient for the settlement and support of a minister. In 1712, the application was renewed, and the following act of incorporation passed :—

*In Council.*—Upon reading a petition of several of the inhabitants of the easterly part of the town of Bridgewater, and several proprietors of land adjoining, to be made a township, the whole of said tract containing about six miles in length and about four miles and a half in breadth—bounded on the north on the line of the late colonies of Massachusetts and Plymouth, east upon the town of Scituate, south on the line that is the

southerly bounds of the lands of John Cushing, Sen. and Jr. Esqrs.—and from thence, on the south-westerly side by certain bounds, which the town of Bridgewater have set up and prefixed, to Beaver Brook—and on the west by the said brook, until it comes to the extent of the town of Bridgewater northward—together with a small gore of land, lying between the said township and the line of said colonies.\* The town of Bridgewater having signified their consent thereto, and a plat being now presented, and the petitioners setting forth, that they had settled a learned and orthodox minister—

*Ordered*, that the prayer of the petitioners be granted—the tract of land within mentioned to be erected into a township, and that the town be named *Abington*.

*Tuesday, June 10, 1712.*

Concurred by the Representatives.

Consented to, J. DUDLEY.

The boundaries of the town, at the present day, vary from those described in this act, and show losses of territory, on the east and south, and on the gore between the six-mile and Colony line.

Hanover took off a large tract. Before the incorporation of that town, the east line of Abington was six miles long, running from Accord Pond about south and crossing the highway in Hanson, a little to the eastward of Dr. Samuel Barker's, 'to a white oak tree about two feet over.' This tree, which was the south-east corner of the town, and also of the Indian grant to

\* There is, before me, a copy of a plan of the town, made by Col. Samuel Thaxter, of Hingham, in 1706, the boundaries of which correspond exactly with those described in this act. The territory is said to contain 15,518 1-2 acres.

Cornet Stetson, and Colony grant to Moses and Aaron Simmons, is supposed to have stood not far from the lower tack factory, on Indian head-river, in Hanson. From this corner the line run west about nine degrees south (it was probably parallel with the south line of Hatherly's grant) two miles to a stake and stones.

By the act incorporating Hanover, in 1727, the boundaries of that town began 'at the *third* herring brook, at Dea. Jacob's saw-mill dam, and from thence running near west, about two hundred fifty-six rods to the north-east corner of Isaac Turner's great lot—thence near west with the north side line of said great lot one mile to the *Share line*, (then the east line of Abington,) and thence, continuing the same course, *three quarters of a mile, (to the east side of the small shares)*—thence turning and running near south two miles to the south-west corner of Nehemiah Cushing's lot—thence south five degrees and forty minutes west, to the southerly bounds of Abington.'

The new south-east corner, established by this act, was about two hundred fifty rods westerly from the preceding. In the old perambulations of the town lines, this corner bound is said to be 'a crotched pine tree, standing in the swamp to the south-west of Col. Elijah Cushing's dwelling-house.' He lived in Hanson, where his great grandson, Elijah Cushing, now lives.

In 1746, the second parish in Pembroke, now Hanson, was incorporated. It was made up of the corners of five towns, viz. Abington, Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanover and Pembroke. In 1754, all that part of the

territory of the parish not then belonging to Pembroke, was annexed to that town.

There is some difficulty in fully accounting for the losses on the gore. The present Eastern boundary in part, between Abington and North Bridgewater, is the east line of the grant to Peregrine White. Immediately west of this grant was a tract of land containing about 200 acres, which Robert and Daniel Howard bought of Dorchester in 1726; and west of that, in the angle of the 6 mile and Colony line, another tract of 200 acres, which Robert Howard and others purchased of the Province in 1727. In 1730, on Petition of the Selectmen of Bridgewater, the latter tract with the two families of Howards upon it, was annexed to Bridgewater, 'during the pleasure of the Court.'—How the former tract and White grant became part of Bridgewater, is not known. No act of the Legislature has been found annexing them to that town. There appears to have been some controversy between Abington and Bridgewater in 1742, about their bounds in this direction, and Bridgewater then appointed agents to petition the general court 'to send a committee to fix a north-east corner of their township.' If a petition was presented, it does not appear what was done. The matter was however settled as early as 1753, as in that year, the line between the towns was perambulated, and began, 'at the patent line run by Col. Thaxter and Capt. Thompson, at a stake and heap of stones, which is the north-east corner of the Peregrine White grant, and run south upon the easterly end of said White's grant, until it comes to the 6 mile line of Bridgewater.'

## ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS.

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### FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

It was stated in the Petition for an act to incorporate the town, that a minister had been settled. By this, nothing more could have been intended than that some arrangements had been made to settle one. Mr. Samuel Brown was the first minister. He says he ‘came to Abington by a unanimous call from the people there to settle, on 8th December, 1711.’ By a deed dated 4th March, 1712, Jacob Nash of Weymouth, and ‘Andrew Ford, senior, living near the Town of Bridgewater, in consideration of £112 current money to them paid by the inhabitants, and some of the proprietors of the north-east end of the town of Bridgewater, and of the land adjoining, in behalf of Mr. Samuel Brown of Newbury, in the County of Essex,’ conveyed to Mr. Brown sixty acres of land, for an homestead, reserving ‘half an acre about the meeting-house for conveniency.’

On the 2d of March, 1712-3,\* articles of agreement were entered into between Mr. Brown and the town, whereby he agreed to settle as their minister, and they on their part, in addition to the house and land, which they said had been given him, agreed to pay him the first year a salary of £48, and to add to that £2 a year

\* See Appendix A.

until it amounted to £60, and then £1 a year until it reached £70, which sum thenceforth was to be his stated salary for life.

For some unknown reason, perhaps because the meeting house was not finished before, his ordination did not take place until 17th November, 1714. On that occasion, according to the custom of the day, Mr. Brown probably preached the sermon.

During the first and greater part of his connection with his people, Mr. Brown's labors appear to have been useful and acceptable. Among other proofs of their attachment to him, may be mentioned the practice of the town for several years, of getting his fire-wood for him.\*

About five years before the end of his ministry and life, serious difficulties arose between him and a portion of his church and society. June 11th, 1744, there was a church meeting to consider certain charges† 'against the Pastor, respecting doctrines delivered by him in public and private.' Mr. Brown explained to the satisfaction of a great majority of the church. They were, nevertheless, willing a council should be called as re-

\* In 1717, the town voted to 'get Mr. Brown's fire-wood, and every man that don't come to help cut wood a day, shall pay 2s. 6d. to Deacon Whitmarsh and Deacon Lincoln, and they are to hire men with the money to cut wood.' The next year, the vote was that 'every man shall cut a cord of wood (except them that cart it) for Mr. Brown.'

† Among the doctrines Mr. Brown was charged with believing, were the following:—

1. 'That godly sorrow is preliminary to true and saving faith.'
2. 'That the seed of grace is implanted in the soul before conversion, and there grows till it is ripe for the new birth.'
3. 'That our being thankful for mercies received, moves God to bestow more.'
4. 'That the tears of unfeigned repentance (as it was alleged he had said in a sermon) would quench the fiery stream of God's wrath.'



quested, if the dissatisfied would be at the cost 'of calling and entertaining them, which the church thought but reasonable, seeing they were the party aggrieved, and not the church, but the offer was not closed with by the dissatisfied.'

The first indication of these troubles in the town records is a vote, passed 9th February, 1748, to reconsider a vote at a former meeting, granting Mr. Brown £300, old tenor, for his salary, and then voting him only £70. At that time the depreciation of bills of credit,\* of the 'old form and tenor,' was such that these £70 were not worth more than £10 in specie. A number of the inhabitants, whose names are in the town books, opposed these votes, and in the language of the record, 'entered their detest against the proceedings of the meeting.'

At a church meeting 31st August, 1748, another set of charges was preferred against Mr. Brown, and he and the church desired to join in calling a council to decide upon them. The request was acceded to, and a council finally agreed on, to consist of delegates from two of the three following churches, probably selected by Mr. Brown, viz. 2d church in Scituate, 1st in Hingham, and 1st in Weymouth—and two from the three following, selected by the dissatisfied brethren: 1st church in Attleborough, 2d in Wrentham, and the church in Halifax. Which four of these churches were agreed upon, does not appear.

The charges were—errors in doctrine—admitting into his pulpit clergymen 'not friendly to the great and soul-humbling doctrines of the Gospel'—arbitrariness

\* See Appendix B.



in church meetings and church government—and lying. At the appointed time, the council met and ‘cleared the Pastor of all said matters of charge.’ This result did not prove satisfactory to the opposition, nor restore harmony. The minority of the church, consisting of the dissatisfied brethren and constituting over one third of the members, absented themselves from church meetings, and the communion, and finally, at an organized meeting of their own, ‘voted the pastor out of his office.’\*

This course of procedure was thought so irregular and disorderly, as to require animadversion. Accordingly, the church and pastor proceeded to call a council to meet 22d August, 1749. In the letters missive, it was said, the church ‘had been for a long time under contentions and dissensions, and yet continued so to be, by reason of that sect called *New-lights*, who had proceeded from one step to another presumptuously, and now at the last, Justice Pool, who is one of them, proceeded in behalf of the dissatisfied, upon the sabbath after public worship, to warn a church meeting. At the time appointed a number of them came together, and proceeded to choose a moderator, to which office they voted Justice Pool, and also chose Capt. Obadiah Reed for their clerk; after which they proceeded to call a vote to eject their pastor out of his office—and that, although they were by the pastor charged to de-

\* The minority justified themselves on the ground that they had repeatedly requested the privilege of a church meeting, to consider the subject of Mr. Brown’s dismissal, and had been unreasonably refused. Mr. Brown attended the meeting here referred to, and made to it a written communication (a copy of which is before the writer,) manifesting strongly the highly excited state of his feelings.

sist from their disorderly and irregular proceedings.' This council probably met, and possibly another called by the minority, but the records are defective, and the result is not known. Whether any thing done by them, or any proceedings or occurrences connected with their meeting, had any influence with Mr. Brown, is uncertain. He seems, however, to have perceived a wide and an impassable gulph between himself and a portion of his people, which must put an end to his future usefulness as their minister—and therefore proposed to ask a dismission on the following terms, viz. that the town should pay him annually, during life, £100, old tenor, beside exempting him and his estate from taxation, and join him in choosing arbitrators to decide what was due him on account of arrears of salary.

These propositions were submitted to the town, at a meeting 31st August, 1749, *Thomas Clapp, Esq., of Scituate*, presiding as moderator, and were agreed to on their part.

As the old tenor bills were greatly depreciated, their rate compared with silver, was fixed at 55 shillings per ounce; and the moderator, Benjamin Lincoln, of Hingham, Thomas Croade, of Halifax, Elijah Cushing, of Hanover, and Thomas Foster, of Plymouth, were agreed upon to settle the amount due on account of salary.

Mr. Brown thereupon asked a dismission in the following words—

‘Brethren of the town,

‘In consideration of the difficulties which attend my continuance in the work of the ministry among you, I desire you would grant me a dismission therefrom.

SAMUEL BROWN.’

During Mr. Brown's ministry, a period of thirty-seven years, there were added to the church, consisting at its foundation of eight male members,\* 207 persons, of whom 93 were males, and 114 females. In 1742, there were 41 admissions. The whole number of baptisms was 512.

After an unsuccessful attempt to settle the Rev. Jonathan Ellis, who had been then recently dismissed from the Manomet Ponds Society, in Plymouth, the town, 23d February, 1750, concurred with the church in a call to Mr. Ezekiel Dodge, of Shrewsbury, in the county of Worcester. The calling having been accepted, the town voted Mr. Dodge for three years, £111 2s. 2d. for salary and settlement, and afterwards an annual salary of £66 13s. 4d. lawful money. In addition to this, he was supplied with firewood until 1750, when £6 13s. 4d. were added to his salary 'in the lieu of his wood,' making the salary afterwards £73 6s. 8d.

Mr. Dodge's ordination took place 23d May, 1750. On that occasion, the introductory prayer was made by Rev. John Angier, of East Bridgewater. Sermon by Rev. Mr. Cushing, (supposed) of Shrewsbury; Charge by Rev. Mr. Eells, of Scituate, and the Right-hand of Fellowship by the Rev. Mr. Bailey, of Weymouth.

Mr. Dodge's ministry furnishes but few materials for remark. From beginning to end, great harmony prevailed between him and the people of his charge.—There were no important differences and therefore no controversy between them, about doctrines. Nor were

\* They were Samuel Brown, William Hersey, Andrew Ford, William Tirrell, Ebenezer Whitmarsh, Joseph Josselyn, William Reed, and Joseph Lincoln.

there any councils ever called to settle differences in church affairs. This, no doubt, contributed to peace, for although these tribunals may be sometimes necessary, experience, it is believed, has shown, that to call them frequently and on slight occasions, tends rather to excite than allay contention and discord.

Soon after Mr. Dodge's settlement, a new form of church covenant was introduced. It did not differ materially from that adopted at the foundation of the church, excepting only, that after reciting that different opinions prevailed among christians about the doctrines of the gospel, it proceeded to express the assent of the church to the doctrines contained in the shorter catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines; attempts have been made to alter this covenant, but it has hitherto remained unchanged.

In 1751, the practice, which continues to some extent to this day, began, of requiring from persons propounded for admission to the church 'a relation of their religious experiences.' The vote of the church was 'that it be expected of those who offer themselves to our communion, that they give some account of their faith, and the reason of their hope, for the satisfaction of our rational charity.'

The whole number of Baptisms in Mr. Dodge's time, (twenty years) was 742. It is not easy from the manner of keeping the records, to ascertain the exact number of admissions to the church in full communion. It was at least 105; forty-six males and fifty-nine females.

After Mr. Dodge's death, the pulpit was supplied by

Mr. Silvanus Ames of Bridgewater, Mr. Ephraim Ward and Mr. Samuel Niles, jr.

At a town meeting Feb. 5th, 1771, it was put to vote 'to see if the town would concur with the church in giving Mr. Samuel Niles, Jr., (of Braintree,) a call to the work of the ministry among them. There were 104 votes ; 89 yeas and 15 nays. Afterwards the non-voters were desired to give their votes, and there were 72 yeas and 4 nays ; total 161 yeas and 19 nays.\* A settlement of £133 6s. 8d. lawful money was voted Mr. Niles, and a yearly salary of £93 6s. 8d.† The call was accepted, and a council met 24th July following, to ordain him. They continued in session two days, and then adjourned without effecting the object. The principal impediment, it is understood, arose from doubts about the soundness of his religious creed. There were other objections, founded on some alleged instances of irregular conduct in youth, not vicious indeed, but showing as was supposed a want of that seriousness and sobriety of deportment proper and necessary in a minister of the gospel. But these, it is believed, were considered frivolous and not presenting any obstacle in the way of proceeding at that time.

\* The only person living who acted in the settlement of Mr. Niles, is Deacon Ephraim Stetson, now in the 94th year of his age. He resides in the northeast part of the town.

† For several years before Mr. Niles's death, his salary was raised by an annual vote to \$500. In 1802, a committee was appointed to compare the prices of beef, pork, corn, rye, flour, and other necessities for the support of a family at that time, with the prices of the same articles when Mr. Niles was settled. From their report, it appeared that £93 6s. 8d. would purchase as much in 1771 as £150 in 1802. Upon the principle of making up the depreciation in the value of money, the committee reported due Mr. Niles over what he had received for the last four years, £105 ; and that sum was accordingly voted him by the town.



Another council met 25th September. After receiving from Mr. Niles a full confession of his faith in writing, and satisfaction as to his moral character, they proceeded to his ordination.\* The introductory prayer was made by the Rev. Mr. Wales, of Marshfield; sermon by the Rev. Mr. Weld, of Braintree, from II. Tim. ii. chap. 2d v.: ‘And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit them to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.’ Charge by the Rev. Mr. Dunbar of Stoughton; right hand of fellowship by the Rev. Mr. Shaw of Bridgewater; and the concluding prayer by the Rev. Mr. Taft of Braintree, (now Randolph.)† The sermon, charge, and address in giving the right hand, and Mr. Niles’s confession of faith, were published.

This large church and society, (the latter including then, all the inhabitants of the town, and several families from East Bridgewater,) down to 1804, were remarkably united and prosperous. To that time, nothing important had occurred to interrupt the great degree of harmony, that prevailed among them. Then, unfortunately, a controversy arose, which in its onward progress enlisted more or less the feelings of nearly the whole population of the town. It regarded a matter, which an unconcerned spectator, at the time, and all, after the excitement was over, could not but consider altogether unworthy of the importance that was

\* Lieut. Samuel Brown provided the entertainment for the two Councils. The cost of the first was £23 6s. 8d.; the second, £15 6s. 8d.

† The other members of the Council were Messrs. Porter of North Bridgewater; Conant, Middleborough; Briggs, Halifax; Williams, Weymouth; Wibird, Braintree, (now Quincy;) Searl, of —————; and Hopkins of Newport, R. I.

attached to it. At first, the dispute was about time in the performance of church music. Whether the movement should be a little quicker or a little slower. This question brought up the right of appointing the choristers. On one side it was said to belong exclusively to the church, on the other to the congregation; and acting on their supposed rights, these bodies appointed different persons to that office. The town acting as the congregation, Nov. 4, 1804, voted, 'That the singers of the town should improve the seats formerly voted to the use of the singers, under the direction of the choristers appointed that day,' and no person was to 'presume to set the tune in time of public worship, except those choristers.'

On a sabbath subsequent to this, (23d Feb. 1806,) the singers were seated in two divisions, one in the seats usually occupied by them, in the front gallery, under the direction of a chorister appointed by the church, and the other, in one of the side galleries, under the choristers chosen by the town. A hymn having been read as usual for the purpose of being sung, two different tunes were thereupon named by the choristers of the respective parties, and the hymn sung in both at the same time.

The agitation and confusion occasioned by this gross act of irreverence in the house of God, may be more easily imagined than described. It was indispensably necessary to prevent a recurrence of another disturbance of the like kind; and to that end, singing as a part of public worship was, for some time, omitted.

At one period, the excitement was so great, that to put an end to it, a vote, (really it is believed, though



not nominally, on this ground) was obtained to divide the town, and a committee agreed on to draw the dividing line. How this measure was expected to produce the intended effect, may not be understood by the younger inhabitants of the present day. The explanation is, that the town was divided on the disputed points, nearly by a geographical line; the north part arranged themselves on one side and the south on the other. Fortunately this project was not carried into execution.

An effort on the part of the church to restore peace was finally successful.

At a meeting 17th March, 1806, they voted that ‘although the church consider it their exclusive right to choose choristers to lead the music in public worship, yet for the sake of restoring peace and harmony in this religious society, they submit the following proposals to the consideration of the congregation for their acceptance, namely, to proceed in choosing choristers agreeably to the usual practice in selecting a minister; that is to say, the election shall first be made by the church, then presented to the congregation for their concurrence, but in case they shall non-concur, the church may proceed to another choice, and present their doings to the congregation, and thus proceed until an agreement can be obtained.’

These proposals were submitted to the town 17th April, and agreed to on their part.

It may be thought by some unwise to revive the memory of this controversy. To such it may be said, the experience of the past is only valuable as it influ-

ences the present and future ; and history can never become what it should be, ‘philosophy teaching by example,’ if we exclude from its records all transactions, on which we cannot look with complacency.— To the mariner, the buoy that marks the sunken rock and warns him to avoid it, is no less dear, than the beacon, which discovers to him his destined port. The lesson which this great contention about a little thing teaches is the extreme folly of permitting passion and prejudice, the pride of opinion and the spirit of party, especially in small matters to take the place of reason, common sense, and a just estimate of things.

In Mr. Niles’s time, a change was introduced restricting within narrower limits the administration of the rite of baptism. From the foundation of the church to 1788, it had been the practice, in conformity with the doings of the synod which met at Boston, in 1662, to baptise the children of all, who had been baptised themselves, on their owning, what was called, the half-way covenant. It was in consequence of this usage, that the number of baptisms was so great in the days of the two first ministers, and the first part of the ministry of Mr. Niles. Most, if not all the children born were admitted to this rite. At the time mentioned, the church, by a small majority, voted to do away the practice, so as to limit the privilege to children of church members, in full communion. This vote in a motion to reconsider, made the next year, was confirmed by a majority of 27 to 14.

Mr. Niles continued his ministerial labors until Nov. 1811, when he was suddenly prostrated by paralytic affections.

The pastoral office, after Mr. Niles's death, remained vacant until 1815. In May of that year, the Rev. Holland Weeks, a graduate of Dartmouth college, in 1795 was invited to settle on a salary of \$500 a year. He accepted the invitation, and was installed 9th August following. Sermon by Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin.

Mr. Weeks continued in the ministry until 1820, when it appeared his religious sentiments had undergone a radical change. In consequence the church and society became dissatisfied, and desired him to ask a dismission. He did not choose to comply with the request, but proposed a mutual council. The proposal was agreed to, and the council met 26 July, 1820. As the *result*\* of that very respectable body may be deemed an important document and contains all that is necessary to a proper understanding of the case, it has been thought best to insert it in this place entire.

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An Ecclesiastical Council was convened, agreeably to letters missive from the Rev. HOLLAND WEEKS, Pastor, and a Committee of the first Church of Christ in Abington, at the house of Capt. *Benjamin King*, in that town, on the 26th day of July, 1820, consisting of the following churches, viz :—The church in Franklin, Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, D. D. pastor, Deacon James Metcalf, delegate ; church in Attleborough, Rev. Nathan Holman, pastor, brother Daniel Babcock, delegate ; first church in Dorchester, Rev. Thaddeus Mason Har-

\* This result was the joint production of the Rev. Drs. Worcester and Harris, one dictating the matter, and the other reducing it to form.

ris, D. D. pastor, Deacon James Humphreys, delegate ; Tabernacle church in Salem, Rev. Samuel Worcester, D. D. pastor, Rev. brother Paul Jewett, delegate ; first church in Dedham, Deacon Samuel Fales, and brother Samuel Haven, delegates ; fourth church in Bridgewater, Rev. Daniel Huntington, pastor, brother Perez Southworth, delegate.

The second church in Bath, in the State of Maine, had also been sent to, but declined representation in this council, as by information transmitted in a letter from their pastor, the Rev. William Jenks. The church and pastor at whose request this council was convened, having, however, agreed that a failure of this fact should not stay the proceedings, the council was formed ; and the Rev. Dr. Worcester having been mutually chosen by the church and pastor, was requested to take his seat as Moderator. The Rev. Mr. Huntington, was chosen scribe, and the Rev. T. M. Harris, D. D., assistant scribe ; after which the moderator opened the council, by devoutly imploring divine light, assistance, and direction.

The Rev. Mr. Thompson, on the part of the church, communicated the records and votes of the church and parish relative to their doings preparatory to the calling of this council. On which it was *Voted*, that we are so far satisfied with the regularity of these proceedings, as to think it proper to go into a hearing of the case. The council then adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock, P. M. in the meeting-house.

Assembled at the time and place of adjournment, an examination of the charges specified and laid before the council, occupied the remainder of the afternoon. The

council then adjourned to the house of Mr. Brown, and resumed the discussion by themselves. At half past 8, the council adjourned to 8 o'clock in the morning, when they again met, and spent the remainder of the day in a patient investigation of the subject submitted to them, till they came to the following result :

In the allegations exhibited on the part of the church, against the Rev. Mr. Weeks, and which are referred to in the letter missive, as ‘ certain difficulties which had been specified,’ it was stated, ‘ we believe that you have adopted sentiments in divinity different from those you professed to believe at the time of your settlement, and so far embracing the system of Emanuel Swedenborg, as to be subversive of the fundamental principles of the gospel, calculated to introduce error and delusion, and tending to licentiousness and vice ;—and that in a number of instances of late you have preached false doctrines.’ Reference was then made to certain specified sermons ; and several doctrines or opinions, alleged as advanced or held by Mr. Weeks, were mentioned in distinct articles.

Mr. Weeks answered to these allegations with a very becoming deportment, and with a highly commendable readiness and frankness. Such of his sermons as were called for, he advanced ; such portions of them as were desired, he read ; and with respect to no point of inquiry did he show any disposition to conceal, or to embarrass.

He admitted explicitly that he had adopted sentiments in divinity different from those which he professed at the time of his settlement ; that he had embraced the system, scheme, or doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg,

in as far as he had read and understood them ; that he had read several of the principal works of that writer, and that he had no reason to think that he should disapprove of any part of his system or sentiments ; and that he believed he had said, and he was still free to say, that ‘ previous to reading the writings of Swedenborg, he now considered himself to have been a very unprofitable preacher, because prior to that he did not understand the spiritual or internal meaning of the word.’

In the same frank and explicit manner, in answer to other allegations and inquiries, he made also the following particular avowals, viz.—‘ That he does not hold the generally received doctrine of the resurrection of the body at the last day ; but believes that every person immediately after death rises or is clothed with a spiritual body, and that this is what he understands by the resurrection : That he does not hold the generally received doctrine of a last day, and a universal judgment ; but believes that at the close of each of the several successive dispensations, there is a general judgment of all who live under that dispensation : That he does not hold the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead ; but believes in a trinity subsisting in him in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily ; a trinity, consisting of divine love or the Father, divine wisdom or the Son, and divine operation or the Holy Spirit : And that he believes, as stated in the seventh of the forty-two propositions, published by the committee of the New Jerusalem Church in London, ‘ that the doctrines universally taught in the old church, (by which is meant the general body of professing christians, in distinction



from the New Jerusalem, or new church,—to which church he would consider all spiritual men as virtually belonging,) ‘particularly the doctrines respecting three Divine persons, the atonement, the justification by faith alone, the resurrection of the material body, &c. are highly dangerous to the rising generation, inasmuch as they tend to ingraft in their infant minds, principles diametrically opposite to those of the new church, and consequently hurtful to their salvation :’ That he holds that all prayer should be directed to Christ as God, clothed in a divine body and a human form : That he believes that, as ‘the earth abideth forever,’ the sun and moon will continue to rise and set as they now do to all eternity : That he is expecting, and has for years been expecting, a new or farther revelation : That he believes, as stated in the thirty-second of the forty-two propositions published by the members of the New Jerusalem Church at Great East, London, ‘that there is not a single genuine truth remaining in the old church, but what is falsified :’—and also as stated in the 39th and 40th, of said propositions, ‘that now is the second advent of the Lord, which is a coming, not in person, but in the power and glory of the spiritual sense of his holy word, which is himself,’—and ‘that this second coming of the Lord is effected by means of his servant Emanuel Swedenborg, before whom he hath manifested himself in person, and whom he hath filled with his spirit to teach the doctrines of the new church by the word from him :’—that he has read Swedenborg’s treatise ‘on the Pleasures of Insanity concerning scortatory love,’ and finds nothing in it, which, as he understands it, he disapproves ; but that it cannot be rightly under-



stood, except in connection with the preceding treatise ‘on Conjugal Love,’ which is considered by Swedenborg as eminently pure and holy, in distinction from scortatory love, which he condemns and would restrain.

The admissions and avowals now recited, comprise all the important points of doctrine distinctly specified in the allegations of the church, and all concerning which Mr. Weeks was particularly inquired of before the council.

Though we would not advance an opinion relative to these sentiments, derogatory to the christian character of the Rev. Mr. Weeks, or of any who honestly maintain them ; believing that they may be received by their advocates in a constructive sense more favorable to the interests of truth and piety, than that which presents itself most obviously to us ; yet we deem it our sacred and indispensable duty to declare our opinion, that the writings and sentiments in question, according to the interpretation which they generally receive, are anti-scriptural and dangerous.

One article, however, the council deem it proper somewhat particularly to note, viz. ‘ the second coming of the Lord is effected by means of his servant Emanuel Swedenborg, before whom he has manifested himself in person, and whom he hath filled with his spirit, to teach the doctrines of the new church by the word from him.’ Here the high claims of Swedenborg are fully admitted ; and he is solemnly acknowledged as a divine messenger, a teacher sent from God, a man who was favored with familiar converse with God in the celestial world, and authorized to declare his mind and will and the true sense of the holy scriptures to men under a

new dispensation, of which he was the special minister. Such were his pretensions and claims ; and such the high authority which his followers are required to allow to his doctrines and instructions.

If these claims are well founded, then under this new dispensation, God is calling upon all men every where to receive Emanuel Swedenborg as his own specially appointed and inspired messenger, and to hear him.—But in what way or manner has God signified this to men ? By what miracles, or mighty works, or prophecies ; by what signs, or wonders, or gifts of the holy ghost ? Where are the credentials, or attestations of such a divine mission ? If it be said that the internal evidence of Swedenborg's writings is so clear and strong as to render all external attestation or evidence unnecessary,—it were proper to ask in reply, are these writings, then, so much more clearly divine in their character, in light, and purity, and weight, than the holy scriptures ? And do the mission and dispensation of Emanuel Swedenborg so far excel in glory those of Moses and of Jesus Christ ?

This council can by no means admit it to be right and fit, first to suppose that Emanuel Swedenborg may have been a divinely inspired teacher from heaven, and with this supposition to proceed to the reading of his voluminous writings for the evidence ; but does, on the contrary, believe it to be most proper and important, first to require the signs in him of a divine messenger, the public and solemn and unequivocal attestations of his having been sent from God. This is especially important, as he not only takes upon himself authoritatively to declare heavenly things, but also to take from

the words of God's holy book, not merely by explaining away, or involving in mysticism, its obvious doctrines, but by excluding in effect from the canon large portions, among which are included all the apostolical epistles.

On the whole, it does not appear to this council that in respect to the proper credentials of a divine mission, Emanuel Swedenborg stands on any higher or better ground than Mohammed. But if he was not a special and inspired messenger of God, his pretensions were false, and his alleged mission an imposture. And whether it be not of most delusive and dangerous tendency to yield the mind to such a guidance for its eternal interests, it behoves every person very seriously to consider.

For the reasons now brought into view, and also because we consider the adoption of the Swedenborgian system as a virtual renunciation of this church, and all disclaiming the principles of the New Jerusalem church, we deem it expedient that the connection between this church and their pastor, the Rev. Holland Weeks, be dissolved.

The council have not come to this result without serious and prayerful deliberation, and we would in conclusion express, with great tenderness, our christian regards towards the Rev. Mr. Weeks,—with devout prayers that the spirit of unerring wisdom may guide all his researches after truth and duty, and enable him, wherever providence may cast his lot, to acquit himself to divine acceptance. And we would express our affectionate solicitude for the spiritual comfort and welfare of this bereaved church and people. May the great

Shepherd of Israel watch over them, and lead them continually in green pastures and beside still waters; and in due season furnish them with a pastor after his own heart, that they may be built up in knowledge, faith, and holiness, unto everlasting life.

S. WORCESTER, *Moderator*.

DANIEL HUNTINGTON, *Scribe*.

Mr. Weeks was thereupon, in accordance with the advice of the council, dismissed from his pastoral office. Some time after, he was also dismissed from the church, for having embraced what were deemed 'errors subversive of the gospel of Christ.'

In the fall of 1821, Mr. Samuel Spring, jr. of Newburyport, accepted a call to settle, and was ordained 2d January, 1822. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Dimmick of Newburyport.

Mr. Spring continued his labors until the latter part of 1826, when he received an invitation to become the minister of the North Congregational Society in Hartford, Conn. In consequence of this call an ex parte council was convened at his request, the church and society not opposing, 6th Dec., of the same year.

They decided in favor of his dismissal. Mr. Spring's salary was \$600 a year, beside the use of a house\* and lot belonging to the parish.

After a vacancy in the ministry for about two years and a half, the Rev. William Shed was, on the 1st of January, 1829, installed over the church and society. Sermon, by the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher, of Boston, from cxlv. Psalm, 18 verse.

\* This house, situated on the spot where deacon Edward Cobb now lives, was burnt while Mr. Spring occupied it.

Mr. Shed's health soon became much impaired, and the prospect of his recovery so distant, if not hopeless, that in the spring of the next year, he was, from that and some other considerations, induced to ask a dismission. He died of consumption, Nov. 11, 1830, at the age of 33. Mr. Shed was a native of Mount Vernon, N. H., and a graduate at Dartmouth college, in 1819. He married Miss Mary Howe of Abington.

The Rev. Melancthon G. Wheeler, of Charotte, Vermont, and a graduate of Union college, N. Y. in 1825, succeeded Mr. Shed. He was installed 13th Oct. 1831. The Rev. Daniel Huntington of North Bridgewater, preached the sermon from Romans xv. chap. 30th verse. He was dismissed in 1833.

The present minister is the Rev. James W. Ward, a graduate of Dartmouth college, in 1826. Sermon at his ordination, May 21, 1834, by the Rev. Dr. Warren Fay, of Charlestown, from Romans, xth chap. 16th verse.

The whole number of members of the First Church, in March, 1838, was 148; 60 males and 88 females.

The following is a list of the past deceased deacons of this church, viz. Ebenezer Whitmarsh, Joseph Lincoln, Samuel French, Edward Bates, Joshua Shaw, Samuel Pool, John Noyes, Eleazer Whitman, Daniel Shaw, Jacob Pool, Isaac Tirrill, and David Torrey.

## MEETING HOUSES.

The first religious society have had three meeting-houses. The first stood in front of the old burying ground, near Mr. Samuel Brown's, on land reserved for the purpose in the deed to the first minister. The house was a small unpainted quaker-like building, without steeple, tower, or bell, fitted up in the inside with benches, (the town voted there should be no pews,) and with galleries projecting on the sides so near the pulpit, that in the language of my informant 'a contribution box could be reached from one to the other.'

The vote against pews was not, however, adhered to; as in 1731, mention is made in the town records of the widow Nash's pew; and it is understood there were four in the house, when taken down in 1751.

In the latter part of 1750, a vote was obtained to build a new house, but much difficulty arose about its location. Not being able after many trials to agree on this point, it was at last voted to refer the matter to a committee not of the town.\* January 14th, 1751, they reported 'that the southeasterly corner of Mr. Peter Nash's pasture, on the westerly side of the road, near the northeasterly corner of the Rev. Mr. Dodge's homestead, be the spot whereon to build the said meet-

\* The committee were Josiah Edson, Abel Packard, and David Kingman, all of Bridgewater.



ing-house.' The report was accepted, and the town agreed to build a house, with a steeple — 70 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 26 feet posts, and appointed Lieut. Ephraim Spooner, Christopher Dyer, Jacob Porter, ✓ Capt. Obadiah Reed, Joseph Richards, and deacon Joshua Shaw, a building committee.

When the house was raised, does not exactly appear, but it must have been before the 27th June, as the committee then reported to the town an account of their expenditures to that time, including among other items, charges for 'cider, bread, malt, and cheese, and the hire of men for raising the house.'\*

There were in the interior of this house, beside several long seats or benches below for the accommodation of the elder men and women, and others around the front sides of the galleries, about 70 pews. Over the pulpit there was a sounding-board, projecting from the wall of the house, designed to prevent the sound of the voice from ascending, and thus propagate it in a horizontal direction. Immediately in front of the pulpit, there were two long seats, one for the 'hard of hearing,' and the other for the deacons.

This house stood until 1819, when it was taken down, to give place to the present house.

\* Inquiry was made of an aged and very respectable lady, now living, whether there was any distilled spirits used at the raising? She said there was, and related the following anecdote. A large square bottle, probably of thin glass, containing rum, was deposited at Mr. Dodge's. An individual, noted for his eccentricity and doggerel poetry, came in to drink, and in the act of doing it, drew so hard on the bottle as to exhaust the air within, and cause it to break by external pressure.



## SECOND CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

In 1806, the population of the town had so increased, that Mr. Niles's meeting-house, though large, was insufficient for the accommodation of the inhabitants. To remedy this inconvenience as well as lessen the travel to meeting, a number of individuals living in the southerly part of the town, and the northeasterly part of East Bridgewater, met Nov. 4, and agreed to take the necessary measures for forming another religious society and building a new meeting-house.

In consequence of their proceedings a church consisting of eight male and fifteen female members, was gathered 19th August, 1807; and on the 10th of the next February, a society was incorporated by the name of the 'Union Calvinistic Society, in the south part of Abington.'

Their meeting-house was raised the latter part of May, 1807, on a ground lot, containing three-fourths of an acre, given by Mr. Ebenezer Porter. It was built by a company of proprietors, under the superintendence of Aaron Hobart, jr., James Barrell, Ebenezer Porter, Bela Dyer, and Joseph Gannett, at the cost of about \$6,500.

The house was dedicated 1st June, 1808. On the same day, Mr. Daniel Thomas, a native of Middleborough, and a graduate of Brown University in 1803, was, with great unanimity of the people, ordained as their minister. Sermon by the Rev. Otis Thompson, of Rehoboth. Mr. Thomas's salary is \$400 a year, with leave to be absent a certain portion of the time.

The church, in March, 1838, consisted of 92 members ; 29 males and 63 females.

### THIRD CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

This society was incorporated 24th February, 1813, on the 27th August following, a church was formed consisting of ten male and five female members.

Their first minister was the Rev. Samuel W. Colburn, a native of Uxbridge, Vermont, and a graduate of Dartmouth College in 1808. His installation took place 27th October, 1813. Sermon by the Rev. Otis Thompson, of Rehoboth, from II. Corinthians, vi., 1.

Mr. Colburn continued his services till March 31st, 1830, when, in consequence of difficulties that had arisen, he was dismissed by an ecclesiastical council, convened for that purpose, at the mutual request of the church and Pastor. His salary was \$450, until the death of Mr. Niles, and afterwards \$500.

The Rev. Lucius Alden, of East Bridgewater, commenced his ministerial labors in this society 26th September, 1830. On the 5th December, 1832, he was installed as the pastor of the church and society. Sermon by the Rev. Ebenezer Gay, of Bridgewater, from Ephesians, iii. chap. 10th verse. Mr. Alden graduated at Brown University in 1821. His salary is \$500 a year.

The meeting-house of this society was raised June 9th, 1812, on a lot given by the late David Hersey, at a distance then of nearly half a mile from any public highway. It was built by proprietors, under the direc-

tion of Micah Pool, James Smith, Joshua Curtis, William Torrey, Alexander Vining, William Holbrook, and Thomas Hunt, and cost about \$4,500. The house was dedicated on the day Mr. Colburn was installed. Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Strong, of Randolph, from Psalms, cxxii, 1.

As in consequence of the increase of the congregation, the house had become too small for the accommodation of the hearers, it was enlarged in 1837, by adding 17 feet to the easterly end. At the same time, a new roof was laid over the whole house; the front and steeple were rebuilt in the modern style, and the interior altered by the erection of a new pulpit and new pews. The whole expense, including the cost of a new bell and clock, from the manufactory of G. Holbrook, of Medway, was about \$3,000, and was chiefly defrayed by the sale of the pews.

The whole number of church members in March, 1838, was 95; 39 males and 56 females.

#### BAPTIST SOCIETY.

This society was formed by a voluntary association of individuals, 7th September, 1822. Its principal promoter was the late Josiah C. Rainsford, formerly a deacon of the 2d Baptist church in Boston. Through his means and influence chiefly, a small house was erected in 1822. On the day of its dedication, a church was organized, consisting of 11 members, 6 males and 5 females.

Their first minister was the Rev. William Kimball, who was ordained 30th June, 1824.

The next, the Rev. David Curtis, a graduate of Brown University, in 1808. He was installed 26th July, 1826.

To him succeeded the Rev. Silas Hall, a graduate of Brown University, in 1809. He was dismissed at his request, in 1834. The pulpit has since been supplied by the Rev. William H. Dalrymple, and by the Rev. E. C. Messenger, the present minister.

In 1832, the meeting-house being found too small for the accommodation of the society, a new, larger, and more convenient one was erected at an expense, including the bell, of about \$3,200. It was dedicated 1st January, 1833. Sermon by Mr. Hall, the pastor.

Whole number of church members in March, 1838, was 87—35 males and 52 females.

#### THE FIRST SOCIETY OF THE NEW JERUSALEM.

In 1827, a few receivers of the doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg began to hold meetings in the westerly part of the town. In 1830, a distinct religious society, consisting of ten members, was organized by the name of 'the first society of the New Jerusalem, in Abington,' and the place of meeting was, the same year, changed to the centre of the town. In the winter of 1833-4, a building was erected, called the New Jerusalem Hall, where the meetings for public worship have since been held. This hall, and a dwelling house for the accommodation of the minister, are the property, not of the society, but of individuals, who are receivers of the doctrines.

It having been concluded to take the proper measures to obtain the organization of the society as a church

of the New Jerusalem, a request was sent to the Boston society of the same denomination, in February, 1835, and on Wednesday, the 25th of that month, the pastor of that society, with delegates, met the receivers here, and organized the church agreeably to a recommendation of the general convention of the new church, in regard to the formation of new church societies. The number of persons thus formed into a church was twenty-four.

The licensed ministers of this society have been successively, Messrs. Eleazer Smith, Samuel Worcester, Henry A. Worcester, a graduate of Yale College, and Warren Goddard, a graduate of Harvard. The present minister, Joseph Pettec, a graduate of Yale, was ordained pastor, 26th July, 1838.

#### METHODIST EPISCOPAL SOCIETY.

This society, which was established in 1831, has a house of public worship in the northeasterly part of the town, near the line of Hanover. Their pulpit has been supplied in succession by Rev. John Bailey, Thomas W. Gile, Richard Livesey, Elisha B. Bradford, and the Rev. George W. Bates.

In March, 1838, the number of church members was 72—35 males and 37 females.

## NOTICES OF THE THREE FIRST MINISTERS OF THE FIRST SOCIETY.

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### MR. BROWN.

Mr. Brown was born at Newbury, in the county of Essex, September 5th, 1687. No certain account has been obtained of his parentage, but from a coat of arms formerly belonging to him, and now in the possession of one of his posterity, it is probable he was a descendant of Sir Walston Brown.\*

Mr. Brown took his first degree at Cambridge, in 1709, and came to Abington to preach as before stated, 8th December, 1711.

Little is known of his private character, but by tradition. That represents him to have been a man of benevolent, though quick temper—of respectable intellectual endowments, and in literary attainments upon a level with the clergymen in general of his day.

In his religious sentiments, he might be considered a moderate Calvinist, with an inclination to Arminianism. From some of his sermons in manuscript, which the writer has seen, he seems to have thought it a more important concern how we live, than what we believe. He therefore discoursed less upon doctrines, and more

\* Sir Walston was 'a young knight of King Henry 8th Household.' He attended Lord Davy to the Court of Arragon, in Spain, where he was knighted by the Spanish king



upon the moral and practical duties of life, considering *them* the foundation and essence of all religion. His style of writing was plain and strong, though sometimes coarse and inelegant.

The latter years of his life, as we have seen, were embittered by controversy with his people. Whitfield, a man of very extraordinary powers of elocution, had travelled through the country, ‘playing the bishop in other men’s parishes,’ and by his preaching, had laid the foundation of what were considered by many, great errors in doctrines, and disorders in practice, in the New England churches. Mr. Brown was among his firm and decided opposers. He opposed him, because he thought his mode of itinerant preaching dishonorary to God, and detrimental to the prosperity of the churches and the interests of the christian religion—because his wild spirit of enthusiasm, united as it was in him with uncommon powers of winning popular favor, was the great source of the confusion and disorders of the times—because his preaching too much disparaged the use of reason in matters of religion—because it promoted in the community a spirit of bitterness, censoriousness, and uncharitableness, and tended to destroy the peace and welfare of religious societies, by alienating affection between minister and people, the inevitable consequence of which was, contention and destruction of the usefulness of the settled minister—and because many of his practices were unjustifiable, particularly that singular one of singing psalms and hymns in the public highways, as he and his companions rode from town to town; a thing which he considered, in the language of Mr. Tenant, ‘a piece of weakness and enthu-

siastical ostentation.' For these and other reasons, he publicly declared, that 'he could not with a good conscience, and therefore would not, directly or indirectly encourage him to preach, either publicly or privately, in his parish.'\*

In these views, Mr. Brown differed essentially from many, and some of them among the most substantial of his parishioners. They considered Mr. Whitfield a sound, pious, and very successful minister of the gospel. As such, they were disposed to countenance and sustain him in his preaching and practices. The consequence was, the commencement of a disaffection, which led to that series of troubles, which for years rent the church and congregation, and finally ended in Mr. Brown's dismissal. In this long controversy, there were doubtless errors and faults on both sides.—It is however to Mr. Brown's credit, that nothing appears to have occurred during its existence, to impair in any important degree his standing as a moral and religious man.

Mr. Brown's labors were not confined to the ministry. Tradition informs us, and his account book shows, that he, as was the case with many other clergymen of his time, was in quite extensive practice as a physician. His visits were not confined to Abington, but often ex-

\* For a more particular account of the grounds of Mr. Brown's opposition to Whitfield, the reader is referred to a pamphlet, entitled 'the sentiments and resolutions of an association of ministers, convened at Weymouth, January 15th, 1745, concerning the Rev. George Whitfield.' It is signed by the following persons, viz. Samuel Niles, Braintree, Moderator; Nathaniel Eells, Scituate, Samuel Brown, Abington, Ebenezer Gay, Hingham, Daniel Perkins and John Angier, Bridgewater, John Taylor, Milton, Samuel Dunbar, Stoughton, Jonathan Bowman, Dorchester, William Smith, Weymouth, John Fowle, Hingham, (now Cohasset,) and Philip Curtis, Stoughton.

tended into several of the neighboring towns. He was also much employed in drawing deeds, wills, and other instruments in writing.

He died of fever, 12th September, 1749, shortly after his dismissal, at the age of 62. His first wife was Dorothy Woodbridge, to whom he was married 24th October, 1712, and by whom he had Woodbridge, born 1714. She died April, 1718, and the next February he married Mary, the daughter of Matthew Pratt, of Weymouth. By her he had several children, but they all died young. After his death, his widow married Josiah Torrey, Esq.

#### MR. DODGE.

Mr. Dodge, the son of Jabez Dodge, was born in that part of Ipswich, in the county of Essex, now the town of Manchester, 21st April, 1723. His father moved from thence to Shrewsbury, in the county of Worcester, from whence the son, after the usual course of preparation, entered the college at Cambridge, where he graduated July, 1749. The 31st of August following, he received, as he says, ‘a full approbation’ to preach, from an association of ministers at Hardwich.\* As the short period of little over a month would hardly be sufficient to qualify him for the ministry, it is probable that having early chosen his profession, a great share of his time at college was devoted to theological studies.

\* Mr. Dodge says, he there met ‘Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, a gentleman of excellent piety and learning,’ and heard his speech before an Ecclesiastical Council.

He came to Abington to preach, 20th January, 1750. In a few weeks, he had a call to settle, which, after declining one at Upton, he accepted. As before stated, his ordination took place 23d of the next May.

Mr. Dodge was much beloved and respected by his people\*; and deservedly so, as he possessed in an eminent degree, all those qualities of head and heart, which create confidence and esteem. He was mild, amiable and conciliatory in his temper and manners—prudent and circumspect in his conduct as a man, and especially so in discharging the various and often delicate and embarrassing duties of the ministerial office. If he had enemies, they were few, and tradition has not told us who they were.

As a divine, he was learned, pious, and exemplary. His religious tenets were the Calvinism of his day.—To these, he adhered with the zeal and firmness of a sincere believer in their truth. At the same time, he was tolerant of the opinions of others, who after diligent and honest inquiry for the truth, could not see as he saw, and believe as he believed. Knowing that mankind were to be judged by their works: that ‘the sheep commends its pasture, not by showing the grass it has eaten, but the wool on its back;’ he was more disposed to regard and value the fruits of morality and piety, manifesting themselves in the lives and conversa-

\* 1767, October 24. Mr. Dodge says, ‘on Thursday last, the inhabitants of the upper part of the town, to the number of 26, come and cut and brought to my door, about 20 cords of wood. The Lord reward them.’

1770, 20th January. ‘The people assembled to the number of 79, and got me about 25 cords of wood.’ After his death, the town voted to pay the expenses of his funeral. The whole cost, including presents of gold rings to the widow and bearers, (according to the custom of the day,) was over \$30.

tion of his people, than their professions and declarations.

He was diligent in his calling. Beside performing with punctuality all the other duties of his office, in a large parish, he composed, in the course of twenty years, over one thousand sermons. Many of them are still extant, but owing to his peculiar manner of abbreviation, and inattention to chirography, they are mostly illegible. He also kept an interesting journal, during the whole period of his ministry. Only a small part of it has been preserved.

Mr. Dodge died suddenly, of apoplexy, 5th June, 1770, in the 48th year of his age. His wife was Mary Goddard, of Sutton, by whom he had, beside several children who died young, Mary, born February 7, 1754, married Rev. Samuel Niles; Mehitable, born February 13th, 1763, married Nathaniel Cushing; Ezekiel Goddard, born April 18th, 1765; he settled at Thomaston, Maine, where he practised medicine. Before Massachusetts and Maine separated, he often represented that town in the Legislature.

#### MR. NILES.

Mr. Niles is descended in the third degree, from Capt. Nathaniel Niles, who died at Braintree, in 1727, aged 87. His grandfather, the Rev. Samuel Niles, was born at Block Island, R. I. 1st May, 1673—graduated at Cambridge, 1699, and was ordained at Braintree, 1711. His first wife was Elizabeth, the daughter of the Rev. Peter Thacher, of Milton, by whom he had, among others, Samuel, born May 14th, 1711. She

died February 2d, 1716, and ‘was the first person buried in the burying place in the south part of Braintree, over against the meeting house.’ His second, was Ann, the daughter of the Hon. Nathaniel Coddington, of Newport, R. I. to whom he was married, as he says, by Gov. Cranston, November 22d, 1716. By her he had Elisha and Susanna, twins, born 1719. She died 1732, and in 1737, he married Elizabeth, the daughter of the Rev. William Adams, pastor of Christ Church, Dedham, and the widow of the Rev. Samuel Whiting, of Windham, Conn.

Although Mr. Niles entered the ministry late in life, the period of his continuance in it, over fifty years, was comparatively long. In the course of that time, he composed and published the following works:—

1745. ‘*Tristiæ Ecclesiarum*. A brief and sorrowful account of the present state of the Churches in New England.’ A learned divine, who had read this publication, spoke of it to the writer as a valuable work, deserving a republication.

1747. ‘God’s wonderworking Providence for New England, in the reduction of Louisburg.’ (Poetry.)

1752. ‘A vindication of divers gospel doctrines and of the teachers and professors of them, against the injurious reflections and misrepresentations, contained in a late printed discourse of the Rev. Lemuel Bryant, (of the North Precinct of Braintree, now Quincy,) entitled—The absurdity and blasphemy of depreciating moral virtue. Also, a few remarks on Mr. John Bass’s late narrative.’\*

\* This work was a part of that religious controversy, which it is said ‘broke out like the eruption of a volcano and blazed with portentous aspect for many



1757. ‘The true doctrine of original sin, stated and defended, in the way of remarks on a late piece entitled—The scripture doctrine of original sin, proposed to free and candid examination, by John Taylor,’ (of Milton,) 320 pages 8vo.

Beside the above, Mr. Niles composed an *History of Indian Wars*. The elder President Adams, in a letter to the late Judge Tudor, September 28th, 1818, thus spoke of that work and its author. ‘There is somewhere in existence,’ says he, ‘as I hope and believe, a manuscript history of Indian wars, written by the Rev. Samuel Niles, of Braintree. Almost sixty years ago, I was an humble acquaintance of this venerable clergyman, then, as I believe, more than fourscore years of age. He asked me many questions, and informed me in his own house, that he was endeavoring to recollect and commit to writing, an history of Indian wars, in his own time and before it, as far as he could collect information. This history he completed and prepared for the press; but no printer would undertake it, or venture to propose a subscription for its publication.—Since my return from Europe, I enquired of his eldest son, the Hon. Samuel Niles, on a visit he made me at my house, what was become of that manuscript. He laughed and said, it was still safe in the till of a certain trunk, but no encouragement had ever appeared for its publication. Ye liberal christians—laugh not at me—nor frown upon me for thus reviving the memory of your

years.’ The Rev. Mr. Porter, of North Bridgewater, took part in it. In 1749, he published a sermon to show ‘the absurdity and blasphemy of substituting the personal righteousness of man, in the room of the surety righteousness of Christ, in the article of justification before God;’ and a reply to Mr. Bryant’s remarks on this sermon.

once formidable enemy. I was then, no more of a disciple of his theological science, than you are now.—But I then revered and still revere the honest, virtuous, and pious man. *Fas est ab hoste doceri*—and his memorial of facts might be of great value to the country.\*

Mr. Niles died 5th May, 1762, aged 89.

Samuel Niles, junior, graduated at Cambridge College, 1731, and at his death was perhaps the oldest surviving *Alumnus* of that institution. On leaving college, he did not study a profession, but engaged for a time in agricultural pursuits. His talents, intelligence, good sense and integrity, soon brought him into public notice. For several years, he represented his native town in the General Court—was a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the county of Suffolk, then including Norfolk—and, after the province had thrown off the power of the mother country, was one of the twenty-eight counsellors, who, before the State Constitution was formed, exercised the executive powers of government. Towards the close of his life, he moved to Lebanon, Conn. into the family of his son Jeremiah, where he died 30th April, 1804, aged 92. In 1739, he married his cousin, Sarah Niles, of South Kingston, R. I. by whom he had Nathaniel,† *Samuel*, Jeremiah, Sands, and Elizabeth.

\* This manuscript was lately found in a box of papers, bequeathed by the late Rev. Dr. Freeman, of Boston, to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and is published in the last volume of their collections.

† Nathaniel graduated at Princeton College, 1766. He was one of the first settlers of West Fairlee, Vermont, where he died, 1828, aged 88. He honorably sustained many public offices—among them, that of Judge of the Supreme Court, and Lieutenant Governor of Vermont, and member of Congress. His second wife was Elizabeth, the daughter of the late Judge William Watson, of Plymouth.

The Rev. Samuel Niles, of Abington, son of the preceding, was born at Braintree, 14th December, 1745. In his youth, he is said to have been uncommonly gay and thoughtless. This turn of mind, however, proceeded rather from the buoyancy of youthful spirits, and an immoderate love of excitement, often attendant on genius, than any inherent perverseness of temper. Being designed for a public education, after the usual course of preparation under Mr. Dodge, he entered the college at Princeton, N. J. in the same class with the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, afterwards the distinguished President of that institution, where he took his first degree in 1769. What his reputation for scholarship in college was, is not known. Having, while there, become more serious in his deportment, on leaving, he resolved to devote himself to the ministry, and accordingly studied divinity, first under Mr. Dodge, and afterwards under the Rev. Dr. Joseph Bellamy, of Bethlem, Conn. Not long after he was licensed to preach, he received and accepted a call to settle in Abington, where he was ordained 25th September, 1771. The duties of the pastoral office he ably and faithfully discharged, until prostrated by a severe paralytic affection, in November, 1811. From this attack, he so far recovered, as to be able to walk a little with assistance, and ride out. Occasionally, he attended meeting, but there he was only a silent hearer in the midst of that very numerous assembly he had so often and with so great power and solemnity addressed, on the doctrines and duties of the christian religion. He knew and was glad to see his friends, and appeared to feel a deep interest in their conversation, but was himself unable to

utter more than a few words. In allusion to his own situation, and by way of expressing the sense he felt of the divine justice in his afflictions, he used often to say—*all is done—all done,—all is right—all right.*—He continued in this wrecked state of body and mind until 16th January, 1814, when he died, in the 69th year of his age.

As the character of this distinguished man has been drawn by his intelligent and intimate friends and contemporaries, it will be more acceptable for the writer to present their sketches, than to attempt one of his own.

The following is an extract from an obituary notice of him, published in the *Panoplist*, April, 1814. It was written by the late Rev. Dr. Jonathan Strong, of Randolph, who preached the sermon at his funeral.

‘As a man, Mr. Niles was peculiarly interesting and agreeable. In conversation, he was pleasant without levity—facetious without malignity, and serious without austerity. He was thoroughly acquainted with the principles of human nature, and quick to discern the motives by which different characters in society are governed. As a friend, he was distinguished for confidence and fidelity. His heart was a cabinet, in which the secrets of others might be locked as safely as in their own. Though not affluent, his house was a mansion of hospitality. No man ever better enjoyed his friends, nor more sincerely sought to make them comfortable and happy. Although, owing to particular circumstances, he was not a man of the most extensive reading, yet he possessed very superior powers of mind. Very few better understood the *art of thinking*, or profited more by it. His ideas were clear in his own

mind, and were generally expressed with uncommon perspicuity. A fair specimen of his talents may be seen in a work, which he had nearly completed for the press, when arrested with the paralytic shock before mentioned. This work has since been published.\* It is entitled, ‘Remarks on a sermon, preached before the association of ministers, in the 3d Congregational Society in Middleborough, September 26th, 1810, by John Reed, D. D., pastor of the 1st Church and congregation in Bridgewater.’ In these remarks, the talents of the author for metaphysical discussion, are strikingly displayed. It is believed, that no candid reader, after examining them, will hesitate to acknowledge, that he was thoroughly conversant with the abstruser parts of theology.

‘Mr. Niles’s manner of preaching was peculiarly plain, luminous, solemn and impressive. By the friends of truth, he was loved and admired, and no person could hear him with indifference. His object was to search the consciences and hearts of his hearers, and to make them feel, in some measure, as they will when standing before the tribunal of the final Judge. Nor did he always fail of success. The profound silence and deep solemnity, frequently discovered by his audience, evinced, that impressions were made that could not easily be effaced.

\* Beside the above, there were published by Mr. Niles—A sermon, delivered at Abington, February 22d, 1800, commemorating the death of George Washington, late President of the United States.

A sermon, before the Massachusetts Missionary Society, at their annual meeting, in Boston, May 26th, 1801.

A charge, at the ordination of the Rev. Seth Stetson, over the 2d Congregational Society, in Plymouth, 18th July, 1804.

‘ With respect to his prayers, it may, with strict propriety be said, they were uncommonly full of thought, pertinent, comprehensive, fervent, solemn and impressive ; and often produced a powerful effect on those who had opportunity to unite with him before the throne of mercy. At such seasons, he sometimes appeared to be raised above all earthly scenes, and permitted to look within the veil.’

The Rev. and very aged Dr. Nathaniel Emmons, of Franklin, in a letter to the writer, 11th September, 1832, says—‘ The father of Spirits endowed Mr. Niles with superior intellectual and reasoning powers. I rarely was acquainted with a man, who in my opinion possessed a stronger and clearer mind ; and who could penetrate deeper into the most abstruse subjects of mental philosophy, as well as natural and revealed religion. He had a clear and profound knowledge of the truth, connection, harmony and consistency of the first principles and essential doctrines of christianity ; which qualified him to become one of the most instructive and powerful preachers I ever heard. His sermons were not superficial, but full of great and weighty truths, which not only commanded the serious and eager attention of his hearers, but deeply impressed their hearts and consciences. No man, whether learned or unlearned, whether a lover or hater of the truth, could sit under his preaching with levity or indifference. His grave and dignified appearance in the pulpit, in connection with his truly genuine eloquence, could hardly fail to strike the largest audience with awe and reverence, and to render him one of the most popular preachers of his day. He was intimately acquainted with human na-



ture, and could render himself agreeable in his common intercourse, with all classes of people ; but he was more especially entertaining in private circles, by the flashes of his wit, and his curious and amusing and striking and pertinent anecdotes. He could, however, turn with peculiar ease and propriety from social to the most serious subjects, and converse very seriously and instructively, upon doctrinal and experimental religion. On all proper occasions, his speech was seasoned with the salt of divine grace, and suited to strengthen the weak, console the disconsolate, and animate the most growing christian. I will only add one more rare and shining trait in his character. He was one of the most undisguised, frank, and faithful friends, I ever knew. He was an Israelite indeed.'

To the above, it may be added, that he was not an inattentive observer of the political events of his time. During the revolutionary war, like most of the clergy, he embraced the cause of his country, and defended her rights with the zeal and firmness belonging to his character.

After the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the country became divided into two great political parties, differing upon questions regarding the powers of the general government and the best modes of administration. Believing that the principles and measures of the Republican party, as developed in the administrations of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, were best adapted to promote the true interests and solid prosperity of the country, he uniformly gave them his support. At the same time, he respected the right of private judgment ; and although properly tenacious of his own political opin-

ions, he never permitted differences in regard to them, even in times of the greatest political excitement, to alienate him from his friends, or interrupt a cordial social intercourse with them.

Mr. Niles married Mary Dodge, the daughter of his immediate predecessor. She is now living, in the 85th year of her age. Their children are, Mary, Sally, Clarissa, Betsey, Mehitable, Samuel, and Laura, born between 1775 and 1794.

## EDUCATION.

The first notice of a school, is in August, 1724. The selectmen were then directed to ‘agree with a man to keep school;’ and they appear to have employed *Mr. Samuel Porter, senior*—as in March, 1727, the selectmen were directed ‘to draw six pounds out of the treasury, and pay Mr. Samuel Porter, deceased, (he died 31st August, 1725,) his keeping school.’

The first school house was built in 1732. It stood near the first meeting house, and was the only one in town before 1755. As the border inhabitants were subjected to much inconvenience in sending their children so far to school, it was occasionally the practice, in order to equalize the travel, to keep the school alternately in different parts of the town, in private houses.

In 1755, the town was divided into five school districts, and school houses built in each. These were altered in 1794, and increased to eight; since, three more have been formed, making the present number, eleven.

The following sums were raised for schooling, in the years mentioned, viz :

	£	s.	d.		\$	cts.
1755	26	13	4	1805	833	33
1765	40	00	0	1815	850	00
1775	40	00	0	1825	1200	00
1785	36	00	0	1835	1600	00
1795	140	00	0			

Different rules have been adopted in different years, for dividing this money. Sometimes each district has drawn an equal share. At others, the division has been, either according to the number of polls, or the taxes paid in each. The present mode is to divide one half equally among the districts, and apportion the other among them, according to the number of children between the ages of 4 and 16. There were 810 of such, in 1837.

The following is a list of such natives of the town, as have received a collegiate education, with the time and place of their graduation. H. U. is for Harvard and B. U. for Brown University. Ministers are in italics.

<i>John Porter,</i>	1736	H. U.
Edward Bates,	1738	H. U.
<i>Solomon Reed,</i>	1739	H. U.
Josiah Brown,	1761	H. U.
Adam Porter,	1761	H. U.
<i>Elias Jones,</i>	1767	Princeton Col.
<i>Jesse Reed,</i>	1769	do.
<i>Samuel Nash,</i>	1770	B. U.
<i>William Reed,</i>	1782	H. U.
Nathaniel Hobart,	1784	H. U.
<i>Jesse Remington,</i>	1784	H. U.
<i>Jacob Norton,</i>	1786	H. U.
Jarius Remington,	1794	B. U.
<i>James Gurney,</i>	1795	B. U.
<i>Abel Richmond,</i>	1797	B. U.
Enoch Brown,	1801	B. U.
Moses Noyes,	1801	B. U.
William Norton,	1802	B. U.

John King,	1802	H. U.
Jacob Porter,	1803	Yale Col.
Benjamin Hobart,	1804	B. U.
<i>John Shaw,</i>	1805	B. U.
Jared Whitman,	1805	B. U.
Aaron Hobart,	1805	B. U.
<i>James Richards,</i>	1809	Williams Col.
Ezekiel Thaxter,	1812	H. U.
Daniel Noyes,	1812	Yale Col.
<i>Asahel Cobb,</i>	—	Ham. Col. N. Y.
Ebenezer P. Dyer,	1833	B. U.
Thomas H. Perry,	1835	Waterville Col.

## POPULATION—EPIDEMICS—LONGEVITY.

There are no means of ascertaining exactly the number of the inhabitants, at any early period. From a remonstrance in 1726, against setting off a part of the town to form Hanover, it appears, the whole number of families then, including the part set off, was 53. Supposing each to have numbered, on an average, 7 persons, the population at that time would be 371.

The number of inhabitants, according to the U. S.

census, was, in	1790	1453
	1800	1623
	1810	1704
	1820	1920
	1830	2423
By State Census in 1837		3057*

The local situation of the town may, on the whole, be considered favorable to health and longevity. Epidemical diseases have occasionally made their appearance, and, in some instances, been attended with great mortality. In 1751–2, a disease, commonly called the *throat-distemper*, prevailed, and carried off many of the inhabitants, particularly children. More than 60 persons died of it.†

\* In 1754–5, a census of the slaves in the Province, 16 years old and upwards, was taken. There were 7 in Abington. In Scituate, 43.

† Mr. Dodge, in his journal, 22d October, 1752, says, ‘from August 1st, 1751, to August, 1752, there died, belonging to this town and congregation, with the throat distemper, 41—in the whole, 50.’ 24th February, 1753, he says—‘attended two funerals of children, who died of the throat distemper. N. B.—We have lost 60 in town and congregation, since August, ’51.’



In the fall of 1805, a *malignant typhus fever* (which in a large, crowded city might have been yellow fever,) broke out, and soon spread through the town. There were numerous cases, in some instances, affecting whole families, and many deaths. What its remote or predisposing causes were, like the causes of most epidemics, was a mystery, which baffled investigation. At the time, it was thought by some to have had its origin in the exhalations of a pond, in the south part of the town, near which the fever began. This pond had been kept up, the previous summer, for the first time, and as its waters did not pass off freely, had become stagnant.—This conjecture was, however, probably without any just foundation, because the pond has been kept up, in the same way, for many years past, without producing any similar effect.

In early times, it was not the practice to record the ages of persons deceased—and for many years immediately preceding 1792, there are no records of deaths to be found. From the subsequent records, and other sources of information, the following instances of longevity have been collected. None have been taken under 85 years of age.

1761.	Mary, widow of Mathew Pratt,	96
1772.	Priscilla, widow of John Pettingell,	87
1774.	Hannah, widow of George Vining,	100
1792.	Sarah, widow of Capt. Daniel Reed,	89
1796.	William Sprague,	86
1797.	Mary, widow of Thomas Mansfield,	88
	Elizabeth, widow of Thomas Wilkes,	91
1798.	Joseph Shaw,	87
	Widow Vinson,	87

1799.	Elisha Vining,	85
1801.	Anthony Dwight, (colored,)*	100
1802.	Deborah House,	88
1805.	Mrs. Morse,	88
1806.	Peleg Stetson,	93
1807.	Joseph Damon,	86
	Stephen Dunbar,	90
	Eleazer Whitman,	91
1808.	Abigail, widow of James Reed,	91
	Ruth, widow of Nicholas Shaw,	91
1809.	Benjamin Farrow,	93
1810.	Joanna Pettingell,	87
	Mary, widow of Samuel Reed,	86
1811.	Widow Lydia Cheesman,	88
	Silence, widow of Edm. Jackson, 3d.	92
1812.	Bilhah Cobus, (colored,)	90
	Lydia, widow of Joseph Richards,	89
1814.	Jacob Noyes,	85
	Samuel Nash,	93
	Jane, widow of Abner Porter,	93
	Abigail, widow of Eleazer Whitman,	91
1816.	Daniel Lane,	92
1817.	John Fullerton,	87

\* Anthony Dwight, commonly called Tony, was a slave, or servant, (as slaves here were usually called,) of Mr. Brown, the first minister. His age is not exactly known, but supposed to be at least 100. In 1742, Mr. Brown records the admission of 'his negro man Tony, and his negro woman Flora,' as members of his church. Many anecdotes are related of Tony's strength and agility. At the raising of a 40 feet barn, belonging to Samuel Norton, Esq. he is said to have jumped from beam to beam, the whole length of the building. The beams were 10 feet apart.

When young, Mr. Brown, to prevent his wearing out his shoes too fast, had a pair made and shod with iron. The night after Tony put them on, he danced them out on a rock.

1818.	Lucy, widow of John Reed,	91
	Kate, (colored,)	90
1820.	Caleb Chard,	90
1821.	Benjamin Gardner,	92
	Noah Gurney,	86
1822.	Leah Farrow,	101
	Joshua Pool,	86
	Ruth, widow of Adams Bailey,	86
	Elizabeth, widow of Nath'l Bicknell,	94
1824.	Mary, widow of Benjamin Farrow,	86
	Jane, widow of Joseph Bicknell,	89
1826.	Ruth, widow of Noah Gurney,	91
1828.	Deborah, widow of John Porter,	88
	James Dyer,	85
1829.	Joseph Shaw,	87
	Rachel Bates,	91
1830.	David Torrey,	85
1831.	Mary, widow of Joseph Shaw,	91
1832.	Thomas Tirrill,	86
	David Jenkins,	85
1833.	Sarah, widow of John Pool,	85
1834.	Jacob Pool,	93
	Abigail, widow of Jacob Dyer,	89
	John Puffer,	87
1835.	Benjamin Vining,	88
	Susanna Askins,	94
1837.	Meriam Hersey,	88

## MANUFACTURES.

Meeting-House Bells were cast in Abington probably as early as at any other place in the country. About 1769, a deserter from the British Army, by the name of Gallimore, a bell founder, came to Abington and was employed by Col. Aaron Hobart, in this business. The air furnace, in which the bells were cast, was a little back of Samuel Dyer's house.

Col. Hobart, about the commencement of the revolutionary war, began the manufacture of cannon and cannon-balls, and was the first person in the country who introduced and carried on this branch of business. At first, owing to a want of experience, and the practice of moulding in sand instead of clay, he was unsuccessful and sustained great losses ; but in process of time, the business was better understood ; and he then carried it on largely and profitably. The cannon were cast hollow and afterwards bored to make the inner surface true and smooth. At the present day, it is thought the better way to cast them solid.

The manufacture of cut nails and tacks originated in Abington over sixty years ago. The first attempts, as is common with all great improvements, were very imperfect. Old iron hoops and afterwards rolled iron plates were cut into angular points, with lever shears. The points were then taken up one by one, by hand,

put into a common vice and headed with a hammer. Mr. Ezekiel Reed, a native of the town, made an important improvement. Instead of putting the points into a vice, he put them into dies set in the two upper and inner sides of an iron frame, somewhat in the shape of an oxbow. The dies were brought together so as to gripe the points, by a lever, moved by the foot. In the former mode, one person could make about 1,000 nails or tacks in a day and about 3,000 in the latter.

These machines have been superseded, for more than twenty years. Those now in use, are very excellent and perfect specimens of mechanical ingenuity, and do much credit to the inventive genius of the country. They are the combined inventions of Col. Jesse Reed, of Marshfield, son of the above named Ezekiel Reed, Thomas Blanchard, of Milbury, and Samuel Rogers and Melvil Otis, of East-Bridgewater. With one of these machines, on which the nail or tack is perfectly made at one operation, a single individual will turn out from 100 to 150 thousand, a day. In 1837, the capital invested in the manufacture of tacks and brads was 57,000 dollars. The number of these articles manufactured in one year ending 1st of April, 1837, was 1832 millions, valued at 82,000 dollars.\*

For several years past, the shoe business has been carried on to a great extent, and given employment to a large portion of the inhabitants. In the year ending as above, 526,208 pairs of shoes and 98,081 pairs of boots were made, the value of which was about 746,-

\* For a more particular account of the manufacture of tacks, brads, &c., in Abington, see a statement of Benjamin Hobart, Esq. to Willard Phillips, published in the Plymouth Old Colony Memorial, 23d June, 1832.

000 dollars. The recent embarrassments in the trade of the country, mainly occasioned as many suppose by over action in almost all departments of business, the natural consequence of excessive issues of bank-paper, and other facilities for the acquisition and enlargement of credit, have been sensibly felt in this business, and also in the manufacture of tacks.



## MILLS.

The first mill was built on the dam across Hersey's River (so called) a few rods above the bridge, between Benjamin Hobart's and Dr. Champney's. The time is ascertained from the records of the Proprietors of Bridgewater. They record the laying out of 13 acres of land, by Samuel Edson, jr., 'the latter end of the Summer in 1693—when John Porter's saw-mill was raised.' In 1696, this mill is mentioned as belonging to 'Josselyn and Porter.' A few years afterwards it became the property of William Hersey, and was for many years known as 'Hersey's saw-mill at Little Comfort.'

The second mill, a saw-mill, was on the same stream above, and near Daniel A. Ford's, erected probably about 1700. The original owners were Lieut. Jacob Nash and Joseph Pool, of Weymouth.

The first mill on the scite, where Beal's corn mill now stands, was a saw-mill built by — Thaxter, of Hingham, in 1703. The mud-sill of this original mill is under the present mill. When the latter was built in 1793, the date of the erection of both was cut in a board and nailed to this sill, then in a state of perfect preservation.

The first mill on Beaver Brook was built in 1729, by Samuel Pool, John Pettingell, Thomas Tirrill,\* Jacob

\* In the written agreement to build, Tirrill is described as an Innholder. He lived near where Zibcon Packard now lives.

Porter, Obadiah Reed and Samuel Noyes, of Abington, and John Kingman, jr. of Bridgewater.

A mill on the stream by Benjamin Hobart's was built in 1731, by Mathew Pratt, Ephraim Spooner, Isaac Hobart, Joseph Gurney, Joshua Pratt and Nathan Gurney. The agreement between them was 'to build a dam and a saw-mill, on a brook near unto and easterly from the Dwelling-House of Elisha Lincoln.'

## OLD COLONY LINE.

The Charter of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, granted by Charles 1st, 1628, describes the south line of the colony as a straight line, from a station distant three miles from the south part of Charles River and any and every part thereof, to another station three miles to the southward of the southernmost part of Massachusetts Bay.

This line, which was the north line of Plymouth Colony, was a long time the subject of animated controversy, and particularly in that part between Abington and North Bridgewater, on one side, and Braintree (now Randolph) and Stoughton, formerly part of Dorchester, on the other.

In 1640, Gov. Endicot and Israel Stoughton on the part of Massachusetts, and Gov. Bradford and Edward Winslow on the part of Plymouth, were appointed to run the line of the colonies. From the mouth of a brook (called by them Bound Brook) they run directly ‘to the middle of a great pond, that lay on the right hand of the upper path or common way that led between Weymouth and Plymouth, close to the path as they went along which was formerly named (and still they desired might be called) Accord Pond ;’ and ‘from thence with a straight line to the southernmost part of Charles River and three miles southerly inward into the country.’ It is not so stated in their report but the

fact is said to be, that when the Commissioners arrived within about three miles of the most northerly part of Plymouth Colony on the easterly side of Rhode Island, they found their course would carry them far south of the true station. Under these circumstances, instead of rectifying their whole line, they made an angle and run so far north as to reach the intended point. At the angle there stood a white oak tree, which from that circumstance was called Angle Tree.\*

The doings of this commission were not confirmed, and the line excepting that part between the pond and bay remained unsettled.

In 1664, another set of commissioners, consisting of Cornet Robert Stetson, Constant Southworth and Josiah Winslow, appointed by Plymouth, and Joshua Fisher, Roger Clapp and Eleazer Lusher by Massachusetts, met to run the line; and finally agreed, that a right line from Accord Pond to Angle Tree should be the dividing line of the colonies. From the pond westerly, they run out and marked a line for about seven miles, to what was then called the path from Bridgewater to Braintree, as part of a line which if produced would, as was supposed, strike Angle Tree, and there in the path set up a stake and heap of stones,† but continued their bound marks no farther.

As it had been discovered in 1704, in running the line between what were then the towns of Taunton

\* In 1790, a Stone Monument fourteen feet high and two wide was by order of the State erected on the spot where this tree stood. On the south side is inscribed 'Plymouth Colony,' on the north 'Massachusetts Colony.'

† This stake and heap of stones was on the present main road from North Bridgewater through Stoughton (corner) to Randolph, a little over half a mile southerly of the present dividing line of the two former towns.

and Bridgewater, on one side, and Dorchester, on the other, that the stake and heap of stones were not in a straight line between the Pond and Tree, but a considerable distance south of such a line, and of course still farther south of a line from the pond to a station\* three miles south of every part of Charles River, it was easy to foresee, that difficulties would arise in regard to grants of land adjoining the line, and also in regard to the jurisdiction of the counties and towns bounded upon it.

Plymouth Colony, in 1665, had granted Peregrine White 200 acres of land, 'at the path that goes from Bridgewater to the Bay, adjoining the Bay line.' White sold this grant, describing it as containing 400 acres, to a Col. Searl, of Dunstable, through whom, in 1703, it came into the hands of Thomas Snell, senior, John Howard and Ephraim Howard. Opposite to this grant on the Massachusetts side, were grants to the town of Dorchester and to the town of Boston. Controversy soon began in regard to these grants.†

Snell and the Howards in 1709 brought an action in Plymouth Court, against one Daniel Waldo, to recover 200 acres of land, bounded westerly on the Braintree and Bridgewater road—southerly on the line of 1664—easterly on Trout-brook, and northerly on Half-way brook.

\* In 1642, this station was attempted to be fixed by Massachusetts. It was called Woodward and Saffery's station, from the names of the surveyors appointed to ascertain it.

† A particular account of the controversies between the proprietors of these grants in the courts of law and before the Legislature, from 1709, down to 1787, would fill volumes. The sharpest and longest one (it lasted from 1747 to 1754,) was between Robert and Daniel Howard, of Bridgewater, and John Windell, Esq., of Boston.

This tract was claimed by the Plaintiffs as part of the White grant, and by the Defendant as part of the common lands of Dorchester, which he had occupied several years as their tenant. The Plaintiffs recovered, but the lands still continued in dispute, for Dorchester immediately brought ejectment for their recovery in the County of Suffolk. This suit was continued in court until 1713, when judgment was rendered against Dorchester. In the mean time the parties had a hearing before the whole court, which resulted in the appointment of Col. Samuel Thaxter, of Hingham, and Capt. Jacob Thompson, of Middleborough, to run out and mark the whole line from Accord Pond to Angle Tree. This service they performed in May, 1713, and the line then run, called the *new Colony line*, in contradistinction from that run in 1664, called the *old Colony line*, was ratified and established by the court. Among the bound marks set up by the committee, was a stake and heap of stones near a *Beach tree* in the line between Dorchester (now Stoughton) and Braintree (now Randolph). From the pond westerly, this line run northerly of the old line, and at the Bridgewater and Braintree road was over half a mile distant from it, so that there was between the two lines a large gore of land extending easterly to Accord Pond.

This gore, by a Resolve of the Legislature, passed 1720, on the Petition of the Representatives of Hingham, Weymouth, Braintree and Dorchester, was ordered to be continued in the County of Suffolk—provided however, that ‘no man’s right of property in the lands adjacent should be thereby infringed.’

About the same time another resolve passed, ‘that



the old Colony line (the line of 1664,) be and is hereby declared to be the southerly bounds of the town of Dorchester and of the grant made to the town of Boston, and that the lands lying between the old Colony line southerly and the new Colony line northerly, from the dividing line between the Boston grant and Weymouth easterly, and the stake and heap of stones westerly, be and hereby is confirmed to the town of Dorchester and the assigns of the town of Boston respectively—*provided it interfere not with any former grants*, and that the remainder of the said lands to the westward of said stake and heap of stones be to the use of the Province.’

The line, still continuing in a state of uncertainty, became the occasion of much difficulty, in settling the line of towns bounded upon it, and especially between Abington and Braintree. The Selectmen of the latter town, in 1734, represented to the General Court, that they had requested the Selectmen of Abington to perambulate the line between the towns, meaning the southerly line, and as they had refused to do so, petitioned the court to pass an order to compel Abington to conform to that line. After a hearing, the court dismissed the Petition, because Braintree ‘had a remedy in the common course of law.’ Braintree thereupon commenced an action against Abington, but what the result was has not been ascertained.

Abington, in March, 1735, Voted, ‘to stand a trial in the law with Braintree,’ but afterwards re-considered the vote and appointed a committee to agree with that town. The issue seems, however, to have been in favor of Braintree, as the Selectmen of the two towns after-

wards in the same year perambulated the line, beginning at the east end and ending at '*Sturdy Oak*,'\* and the same line was perambulated again in 1741.

Abington however did not long acquiesce in the line to Sturdy Oak, and determined to have the controversy settled in a judicial way. Accordingly, Ephraim Spooner, Daniel Reed and John Noyes, Selectmen of Abington, by order of the town, commenced an action of debt on the statute, against John Adams,† Thomas Allen and Samuel Bass, Selectmen of Braintree, for neglecting and refusing, after notice, to run and mark the dividing line of the towns. Abington employed Jeremiah Gridley, one of the ablest, most learned, and respected lawyers of that day, as counsel. Upon a trial had before the Superior Court at Plymouth, July Term, 1754, a verdict and judgment was rendered in favor of Abington for £30 damages and £13 13s. 11*d.* costs of suit. This decision settled the matter so far as Abington was concerned, as the Selectmen of both towns, on the 8th of October following, perambulated the line run by Thaxter and Thompson in 1713, as the true line between them. The judgment of court having been acquiesced in, Abington very honorably relinquished the £30 damages, the object being merely to ascertain the right in dispute.

From this time to 1772, there appears to have been some abatement of the controversy. Litigation having then recommenced, several individuals interested, peti-

\* Sturdy Oak stood 260 rods easterly from the stake and heap of stones in the line of 1664, and at a point therein which would be intersected by extending the line between Abington and Braintree, (now Randolph,) southerly from Beach Tree.

† Father of the first President Adams.

tioned the Legislature to ascertain the line and establish it by a law. Some of the reasons assigned were, that different lines had been established at different times by the Superior Court—that several suits were then pending and that there was no prospect of an end to litigation, without the interposition of the Legislature. The court thereupon appointed Artemas Ward, Esq., Col. Whitcomb and Maj. Fuller, a committee, to be assisted by John Child, jr., as surveyor, to run the line from Accord Pond to Angle Tree. In the concluding part of their report they say—‘ your committee find, to run from the monument aforesaid at Accord Pond west  $20\frac{1}{2}$  degrees south, will lead on to many of the bounds said to be made by Col. Thaxter and Capt. Thompson, in the line run in 1713, and strike the tree aforesaid. And your committee are of opinion, that the return of the doings of the committee in the year 1664, is vague and uncertain, and that the line run in 1713, is the only line that has been properly run out and marked.’

After a full hearing of all parties concerned before the whole court, an act passed 6th March, 1773, ‘ for establishing a line of jurisdiction between the county of Suffolk and the counties of Plymouth and Bristol, so far as the line heretofore described shall extend.’ The act provided ‘ that for the future, a line beginning at a certain heap of stones on the west side of and within five or six feet or thereabouts of a pond called Accord Pond, being a known and anciently reputed bound between the town of Hingham and the town of Abington, and running from said monument west  $20\frac{1}{2}$  degrees south, leaving the towns of Weymouth, Braintree, Stoughton and Wrentham adjoining on the north, and Abington,

Bridgewater, Mansfield and Attleborough on the south, to a certain old white oak tree anciently marked, now standing and being a boundary between the towns of Wrentham and Attleborough, by some called Station Tree and by others Angle Tree, shall forever hereafter be the bounds between the county of Suffolk and the counties of Plymouth and Bristol, so far as said line extends, any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.’ The act concludes with a proviso—that nothing therein should have any effect in determining the right of property in the lands bounded on the line of 1664.

The account here given illustrates the importance of accurate surveys—precise descriptions and fixed and permanent bound marks, particularly in the early settlement of a country. The want of these, not only in regard to this line, but also in very many instances to the dividing lines of towns, legislative grants, and the adjoining lands of individuals, has been the frequent occasion of conflicting titles, vexatious litigation—immense waste of time and money, and what is of higher consideration, the destruction of the quiet and peace of individuals and neighborhoods.

## FRENCH WAR.

During the seven years' war between Great Britain and France, which terminated in 1763, Massachusetts contributed largely to the various expeditions fitted out for the defence of the colonies, and the conquest of the dominions of France, on this continent and in the West Indies. In 1758, she raised by enlistment, or, when that failed, by impress,\* and had actually in the field, 6925 men, besides a large number of artificers, seamen and others already in the service—a force equal to about one third of the entire effective strength of the Province. Her whole military and naval expenses, that year, were £140,200. During the war they amounted, exclusive of the cost of many forts and garrisons, and premiums for enlistments, to £1,039,390. The monies received from the mother country, by way of reimbursement, fell short of these expenditures by over £400,000.†

The Province was stimulated to these great and disproportionate exertions, by jealousy and hatred of the French. On the ocean, they were our rivals in the

\* March 23d, 1748. Nicholas Shaw and Peleg Stetson, it is said, 'were impressed into the king's service to the eastward, but were released on paying a certain sum, and agreeing each one to pay £7 10s. more the next impress.'

† See 'a brief statement of the merits and services of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, their exertions and expenses in the common cause,' drawn up by Thomas Hutchinson, chairman of a committee of the Legislature, and forwarded by their order, 17th December, 1764, to Jasper Maudit, agent of the Province in England.

fisheries, while on the land, all our frontier settlements from Nova Scotia around to the Lakes, were subject, through French influence, to constant anxiety and alarm; and sometimes to all the horrors and calamities of a barbarous Indian warfare. These causes of enmity were strengthened by long standing and deep rooted prejudices against them, on account of their religion.

Abington contributed largely of her strength to carry on this war. The following persons were in the service, and died therein, or on their way home:

Abraham and Humphries, sons of Capt. John Burrill.

Joseph Clark.

Peleg Cain.

David, (colored,) son of Anthony Dwight.

Noah, son of Jacob Ford.

James, grandfather of the late Col. D. Gloyd.

Jacob, son of Capt. Elisha Hersey, drowned near Cape Sable Harbor.

Nathaniel Joy.

Noah, son of Gideon Parkman.

Asa, son of dea. Samuel Pool, died at Halifax, 1762.

Ichabod, son of Capt. Ebenezer Reed.

Ezekiel, son of John Reed.

Samuel, son of William Sprague.

Job, son of Samuel Tirrill, killed by the Indians, while crossing Lake Ontario in a Batteau.

Jonathan Torrey, jr.

Robert Townsend, jr. died of a wound received in the Crown Point Expedition.

Jacob White.\*

\* There are among Mr. Dodge's manuscript sermons, several having special reference to the events of this war. One preached 23d March, 1755, is enti-



The following persons survived the service :

Christopher Askins, jr.

George Askins.

Jeremiah Campbell, at St. Johns, N. S. 1759.

Caleb Chard.

Jonathan Chubbuck, at Newfoundland, 1762.

Greenwood Cushing, at Halifax and Newfoundland.

Elisha Hersey, captain of a company in the Western Expeditions.

Edmund Jackson, jr.

Abraham Josselyn.

Peter Nash.

Samuel Noyes.

Jacob Pool, at the taking of Fort Frontinac, under Col. Bradstreet, 1758, and at St. Johns, N. S.

Samuel Pool.

Joseph Richards.

Isaac Stetson, under Gen. Wolf, at the taking of Quebec.

Jacob Tirrell, at Halifax, 1759.

Prince Stetson.

tled—' Sermon on account of 13 of the congregations' going into his majesty's service.' In the conclusion of an appropriate address to the soldiers, he says—' we, your relatives, friends, and acquaintances, by the grace of God, will send up our prayers to the throne of grace, that the God of power and goodness would encourage your hearts, cover your heads, strengthen your arms, and above all pardon your sins, and save your souls in the day of battle.'

July 3d, 1755, (Fast day,) he preached a 'sermon occasioned by an expedition against divers of the French fortifications on his majesty's territories in North America.'

October 5th, 1759. A 'Thanksgiving sermon, occasioned by the reduction of Quebec, the capital of Canada, and the neighboring villages and country—*Laus Deo.*'

7th October, 1762. A 'Thanksgiving sermon, upon the reduction of Martineco, and more especially the late surrender of the Havanna to his Britannick Majesty's arms, together with the adjacent villages upon the Island of Cuba.'

Ezekiel Townsend.

Robert Townsend, ensign of Capt. Benjamin Pratt's company at the westward.

Jeremiah White.

This list is very incomplete, as will appear by the following, extracted from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

December 28, 1763. There was presented 'a petition of *Elisha Hersey and sixty others, all of Abington*, who had been in his majesty's service in the late wars, praying for a grant of land for a township, eastward of the Penobscot river, in consideration of their services rendered.'

## REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

### POLITICAL AFFAIRS.

The American revolution consisted in that change in the political relations of Great Britain and her American colonies, which grew out of the controversy between them, about the authority of Parliament; and which resulted in the declaration and final acknowledgment of our independence. A very brief, though imperfect account of some of the grounds of this controversy, it is hoped, will not be deemed altogether out of place.

On the side of the mother country, the power of Parliament over the colonies was declared to be supreme. In support of this claim, it was said—

1. That this country having been taken possession of and settled by British subjects, became a part of the British empire, and as such was under the control of the supreme power of the state, vested in parliament.

2. That the Charter of the Massachusetts colony, by the 1st Charles, in 1628, after confirming the grant of the soil by the council of Plymouth, gave the colony power to make laws in particular cases—*provided such laws were not repugnant to the laws of England*—also freedom from taxation in New England, for seven years, and on imports from and exports to Great Britain, for

twenty-one years—exemptions implying, as was said, a liability to parliamentary taxation afterwards.

3. That the charter gave no power to lay taxes, and that the assumption of the right was one of the reasons why the Court of Chancery, in 1684, declared the charter forfeited.

4. That parliament, from the first, had passed laws for regulating the foreign trade of the colonies, among which were the following—

The celebrated *Navigation Act* of 12 Charles 2d, chap. 18. It provided, that no merchandize should be imported into, or exported from, the colonies, but in vessels belonging to British subjects, living either in England or the plantations.

Act 15, Charles 2d, chap. 7. According to this act, no product or manufacture of Europe, could be brought into the colonies, excepting such as had been shipped in England, on board English built ships.

Act 7 and 8, William and Mary, chap. 22d, requiring seamen, in vessels owned by British subjects, living either in England or the colonies, to pay annually out of their wages, a tax for the support of *Greenwich Hospital*, in England.

Act 6, George 2d, chap. 13, providing, that rum, the produce or manufacture of any colony, not belonging to Great Britain, when brought into any of the American colonies, should pay a tax of 9 pence, and molasses 6 pence a gallon, and sugar 5 shillings a hundred.

5. That laws had been passed at various times, for regulating the internal trade and domestic concerns of the colonies. Their wool and woollen manufactures were

not to be exported. Their furs were to be sent to England for a market. Hats were not to be carried from one plantation to another for sale—and no hatter in America was to have more than two apprentices.\* By an act of 23, George 2d, chap. 29, the colonists were prohibited, under a penalty of £200 sterling, from erecting any rolling or slitting mill, or any plating forge to work with a tilt hammer; and all such as had been erected were to be abated as *nuisances*.† In the 9 of Queen Ann, a post office was established and a tax imposed on letters carried by mail.

On our side, it was in the end, generally contended, that parliament had no rightful legislative authority over the colonies whatever.

Our ancestors, when they came here, were by character, entitled to *all the liberties and immunities of free and natural subjects of Great Britain*. They had not by coming to this country, forfeited any of these rights, but were, and their descendants were, entitled to enjoy all such of them, as were applicable to their circumstances and condition here. English liberty was founded on the right of the people to participate in their legislative councils; and as the colonies were not, and from their local situation could not be, represented in

\* The elder President Adams says, that James Otis, in his celebrated argument against writs of assistance, in 1760, alternately laughed and raged against these ‘mincing laws.’ A member of parliament, he said, had declared, that a hob nail should not be made in America. Another had moved, that the Americans should be compelled to bring their horses to England to be shod. This last was a man of sense, and meant by this admirable irony, to ridicule the whole selfish, partial, and contracted system of parliamentary regulations in America.

† At the time this law passed, there were only 4 of these prohibited manufactories in the Province—2 in Middleborough, 1 in Hanover, and 1 in Milton.

parliament, they had the sole and exclusive right of making laws for their own government, in all cases whatever, subject only to the king's negative, in the way provided for by the charter of William and Mary.

The allegiance of the colonies was due, not to the parliament, but to the person of the king, because he was entitled to the crown ; and because they had bound themselves in allegiance to him in that capacity.

Such of the acts of trade as had been executed here derived their force, it was said, not from any inherent right in parliament to pass them, but from the assent of the colonies. After the acts of 12 and 15 of Charles 2d, had lain dormant for fifteen years, the Legislature passed a law requiring their observance. At the same time, they said, in a letter to their agent in London, they 'apprehended these acts were an invasion of the rights, liberties, and properties of the subjects of his majesty in the colony, *they not being represented in parliament*. However, as his majesty had signified his pleasure, that these acts should be observed in Massachusetts, they had made provision by a law of the colony, that they should be strictly attended to, from time to time, although they greatly discouraged trade, and were a great damage to his majesty's plantation.'

The molasses and sugar act was a revenue measure, and as such was pronounced to be a violation of natural right—the English constitution, and all the charters and compacts with the colonies. For many years, it was entirely disregarded. When, finally, an order came for its strict execution, a greater alarm is said to have been produced than that occasioned by the taking of Fort William Henry, in 1757. So strong and determined



was the opposition to this act, that James Otis, by a bold figure, which might now be thought exaggeration, declared, that if the king of England in person, was encamped on Boston common, at the head of 20,000 men, with all his navy on our coast, he would not be able to execute it.

As to the laws for regulating our internal policy, some of them, as the hatter's act, and the act against rolling and slitting mills and forges, were never carried into effect. The post office law was submitted to, because found to be a useful regulation, only a few persons paying the tax, and they deriving a benefit from it. Yet all, who considered the matter, believed it to be an usurpation.

After the peace of 1763, parliament, in pursuance of a plan for new modeling the colonial governments, resolved to assert, and not only assert, but to maintain her claim of supremacy over us, in all cases whatsoever.

Accordingly, orders were issued to the custom house officers here, to execute strictly the various acts of trade. Parliament modified and made perpetual, the sugar and molasses act, and successively passed laws imposing duties on silks and calicoes—wines and coffee—stamped paper—paints, glass, and teas, with penalties recoverable in any admiralty or vice-admiralty court, without trial by jury. They authorised the sending of persons indicted for murder, to a neighboring colony or to England, for trial, if the homicide was committed in attempts to suppress a riot, or execute a revenue law. The province charter was altered, by increasing the number of counsellors from twenty-eight to thirty-six,

and taking their appointment from the General Court and vesting it in the king. All town meetings, except the annual meeting in March, for the choice of town officers, were forbidden, without the written consent of the governor; and grand and petty jurors, instead of being appointed by the towns, were to be returned by the sheriff.

These and other oppressive measures of Parliament, it was clearly perceived, would if submitted to, plunge us at once, into what Mr. Burke called a perfect uncompensated slavery, by joining together the restraints of an universal internal and external monopoly, with an universal internal and external taxation. They were therefore firmly resisted. The officers charged with the execution of the Stamp Act were compelled to resign. Voluntary associations were entered into, throughout the Province, not to import or use any foreign merchandise subject to a tax.

The teas sent to Boston by the East-India Company, were taken by force out of the vessels in which they were imported, and thrown into the dock. Many of the Counsellors appointed by the King were compelled to decline\*—and the courts of justice generally, were prevented by public opinion, expressed in a way not to

\* The writer is informed by an aged uncle of his, lately deceased—that in September, 1774, he and many others from Abington went on an expedition to Marshfield. The object of the party, consisting of seven or eight hundred persons from various parts of the country, was to compel *Nathaniel Ray Thomas, Esq., one of the Mandamus Counsellors*, to decline his appointment. His house was searched, but the bird had flown. In anticipation of this visit, he had the day before made his escape to Boston. His wife and other members of his family were required to certify his absence under oath, administered by Judge Turner, of Pembroke.

be disregarded, from sitting and carrying into effect the obnoxious acts of Parliament.

Finding that all their arguments, complaints, petitions, remonstrances and threatenings were waste water in England—that there was no middle course, between unlimited submission to the will of the mother country and a total independence of her claims, the colonists declared, and after a seven years war compelled Great Britain to acknowledge, their independence.

The part taken in the contest by the people of Abington, as will be seen by the following account, was honorable to their zeal, firmness and patriotism. A few indeed there were, who were lukewarm in the cause, from an apprehension, that the power of Great Britain was too great and overwhelming to admit the hope of a successful resistance. It is indeed wonderful, there were not more of this description. In general, however, and almost universally, they were ready and willing to meet the dangers and responsibility of the crisis, and make the sacrifices it demanded. With the country, they resolved to break the yoke which was attempted to be fastened upon them, or perish in the attempt.

March 19, 1770. The following spirited resolves\* were adopted by the town unanimously.

1st. Voted, As the opinion of this town that all Na-

\* The Committee who reported the resolves were Daniel Noyes, Samuel Pool, Aaron Hobart, David Jones, jr., James Hersey, Joseph Greenleaf, and Thomas Wilkes. These resolves were published in the Boston Gazette. In the margin of a paper containing them in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society, there is the following note. 'Noble resolves and all warranted by the English Constitution, drawn by Joseph Greenleaf, Esq.' Greenleaf lived in Abington about twenty years. A little before the commencement of the Revolutionary War, he moved to Boston. His wife was sister to the late Judge R. T. Paine. A daughter of his married the late Rev. Mr. Weld, of Braintree.

tions of men, who dwell upon the face of the whole earth, and each individual of them naturally are free, and while in a state of nature have a right to do themselves justice, when their natural rights are invaded.

2d. Voted, That mankind while in their natural state always had and now have a right to enter into compacts and form societies, and erect such kind of government as the majority of them shall judge most for the public good.

3d. Voted, That Great Britain had an undoubted right to erect a monarchical government or any other mode of government, had they thought proper, appoint a King and subject him to laws of their own ordaining; and always had and now have, upon just occasions, a right to alter the Royal succession.

4th. Voted, That the right of sovereignty over the inhabitants of this province claimed by any former British King, or by his present majesty by succession, was derived to him by the recognition of the forefathers of this country of his then majesty as their sovereign, upon the plan of the British constitution, who accordingly plighted his royal faith, that himself, his heirs and successors had, and would grant, establish and ordain, that all and every of his subjects, who should go to and inhabit this province and every of their children, who should happen to be born here or on the sea in going hither or in returning from thence, should have and enjoy all liberties and immunities of free and natural subjects within any of their dominions, to all intents, construction and purposes whatsoever, as if they and every of them were born in the realm of England.

5th. Voted, That the late acts of the Parliament of

Great Britain imposing duties on American subjects, for the sole purpose of raising a revenue, are an infringement of our natural and constitutional liberty, and contrary to the spirit and letter of the above mentioned royal grant, ordination and establishment, of having and enjoying all the liberties and immunities of free and natural born subjects.

6th. Voted, That no acts passed in either the parliaments of France, Spain or England, for the aforesaid purpose of raising a revenue, are binding on us, and that the obedience due from us to his present majesty is no other in kind or degree, than such as he has a constitutional right to, from our fellow subjects in Great Britain.

7th. Voted, That therefore, the abovementioned acts are in themselves a mere nullity, and that he who, *vi et armis*, seizes the property of an American subject for not paying the duties imposed on him by said acts, ought to be deemed no better than a highwayman, and should be proceeded against in due course of law.

8th. Voted, That the sending of troops (may they not more properly be called murderers) to Boston by Lord Hillsborough, at the request of Gov. Bernard, to aid and protect the Commissioners of the Customs in levying the taxes imposed on us by said acts, amounts to an open declaration of war against the liberties of America, and an unjust invasion of them; and as we are refused any legal redress of grievances, we are in this instance reduced to a state of nature, whereby our natural right of opposing force is again devolved upon us.

9th. Voted, That the agreement of the merchants and traders of Boston, relative to the non-importation, has a



natural and righteous tendency to frustrate the schemes of the enemies of the Constitution, and to render ineffectual the said unconstitutional and unrighteous acts ; and is a superlative instance of self-denial and public virtue, which we hope will be handed down to posterity, even to the latest generation, to their immortal honor.

10th. Voted, That those persons, who have always persisted in the scheme of importation, and those also, who have acceded to the agreement of non-importation and have violated their promises, and as it were stolen their own goods and sold them to purchase chains and fetters, ought to be by us held in the utmost contempt, and that we will have no sort of commercial connexion with them, or any that deal with them ; and their names shall stand recorded in the town books and be posted up in all public places in town, as enemies of their country.

11th. Voted, That we are in duty bound not to use or consume any articles from Great Britain, subject to duties on the foregoing plan ; and that we will not knowingly purchase, of any person whatever, any such articles until said acts are repealed ; neither will we use or suffer willingly to be used in our families any bohea tea, cases of sickness only excepted.

12th. Voted, That a respectful letter of thanks be addressed to the merchants and traders of the town of Boston, for the noble and disinterested and very expensive opposition made by them to the late attempts to enslave America ; and whereas it appears probable to us, that the goods of the infamous importers, both in this



and the neighboring governments, are vended among us by pedlers, therefore,

13th. Voted, That we will not purchase any thing of them, or suffer any person under us to trade with them, but that we will as much as in us lies, discourage them and endeavour to have the law executed against them, and all such innholders as entertain them contrary to the law.

14th. Voted, That a committee be chosen to enquire, who among us act contrary to the foregoing votes, and return their names to the town clerk, to be entered in the town books, and published in Messrs. Edes's and Gill's paper, as persons confederating with the importers to ruin their country; and whereas the ears of our earthly sovereign, by the intervention of his wicked ministers, are rendered deaf to the cries of his oppressed American subjects, and as we apprehend we have a righteous cause, and as we are assured that the ears of the King of Kings are always opened to the cries of the oppressed, therefore,

15th. Voted, That we will unitedly petition the throne of grace for protection, against encroaching power, whereby our civil liberties are so violently attacked, and our religious liberties endangered; and that Thursday, the 3d day of May next, be set apart by this town for said purpose; and that the Selectmen be a committee to wait upon our Rev. Pastor, desiring him to lead in the exercises of the day, and that by an advertisement, they invite the neighboring towns to join with us in similar exercises, on said day.

16th. Voted, That the foregoing votes be recorded, and a copy thereof be forthwith transmitted to the com-

mittee of inspection in Boston, together with our letter of thanks to the merchants and traders there.'

11th January, 1773. The town accepted the report of a committee appointed to draft an answer to a communication from the town of Boston. The following is an extract from the report. 'We view ourselves under indispensable obligations to give our testimony against all those arbitrary measures and despotic innovations, lately taken place in the Province, viz. such as the appointment of a Board of Commissioners, invested with such exorbitant power, to force from us our property without our consent, for the purpose of raising a revenue. The extension of the admiralty courts beyond all rational limits. The quartering a standing army of regular troops in our metropolis, over whom our Governor declared he had no control, without the consent and in opposition to the remonstrances of the people, which has been the unhappy occasion of blood-shed and murder. The making our Governor (and as we hear the Judges of the Superior Court and others) independent of the grants of the people, and the restraining of his Majesty's Council from meeting upon matters of public concern, unless called by the Governor.'

At the same time, a committee of safety and correspondence was chosen, consisting of Mr. David Jenkins, Capt. Daniel Noyes, Lieut. Nathaniel Pratt, Dr. David Jones, Capt. Edward Cobb, Capt. William Reed, jr. and Mr. Thomas Wilkes.\*

\* In 1776, the committee were, Dea. Samuel Pool, Mr. Daniel Lane, Mr. Micah Hunt, Mr. Joseph Richards, Lieut. Samuel Brown, Mr. James Hersey, Mr. Thomas Reed, Capt John Harden and Mr. Thomas Wilkes.

18th January, 1774. The town accepted the following report of their committee.

The committee of correspondence of Abington having received an address, together with the votes of the town of Boston, at their several meetings relative to the late act of Parliament, granting license to the East India Company to export their teas into the American colonies for sale, subject to a duty to be paid by us, for the sole purpose of raising a revenue for the support of government—the address and votes before mentioned being presented and read to the town, at a legal meeting called for that purpose, January 18, 1774, after due consideration and debate thereon, the inhabitants came into the following Resolves.

1. That it is the opinion of this town, that the East India Company's tea being sent here (or any other commodity whatever) for sale, subject to a duty to be paid by us, for the sole purpose of raising a revenue for the support of government, is a new and unconstitutional innovation, and is greatly injurious to the just rights of America.

2. That such measures continued and persisted in, will have a direct tendency to alienate the affections of Americans from their parent state, and will be the most likely method to dissolve their union, and finally break and destroy the British empire.

3. That it is the duty of every individual in the community as a christian, and a good and loyal subject to his King, and as a freeman, to use all lawful endeavors to oppose such measures.

4. That all the contrivers, promoters and abettors of such schemes ought, by all men, to be avoided as being

at heart inimical to their country and treated as those, who have a premeditated design against the national interest.

5. That it is the firm resolution of this town closely and strictly to adhere to their rights and privileges, and as far as in their power lies, to frustrate the designs of their enemies, who attack them. And to that end, we resolve carefully to avoid purchasing, expending or improving any of the said East India Company's tea, or any other commodity whatever, brought to America by them, or any person or party whatsoever, on such an injurious and insidious plan.

6. That it is the united determination of this town, as good and loyal subjects, to yield all that obedience to our rightful sovereign, the king, which the gospel requires; and as a means conducive to that end, to stand by, maintain and uphold the good and wholesome laws of the land, by which we are governed, in opposition to all those arbitrary, tyrannical, and oppressive measures lately entered into, which so shamefully eclipse the glory of the British crown, and in a very awful manner destroy the peace, happiness and tranquillity of the nation—humbly relying on the God of Providence, who governs all events in the natural and moral world, for safety and protection.

September 30, 1774. The town voted, ‘That none of the inhabitants should afford the (British) troops any aid or assistance, by labor, timber, or any other materials, that might be requisite to enable them to fortify against us, or build barracks for their conveniency and shelter.’

November 14, 1774. ‘Voted an acceptance of (the

doings) of the county Congress, held September 26th and 27th last past.\*

May 27, 1776. The General Court having, by an order, called on the several towns to express an opinion and give their representatives instructions on the subject of independence, the town directed their representative to vote for that measure, and pledged themselves in support of it, 'to stand by the united colonies with their lives and fortunes.'

#### MILITARY AFFAIRS.

July 24, 1776. A bounty of £5 10s. was voted by the town, to each man that should enlist into the expedition to New York ; and 29th, a similar bounty to such as enlisted into the expedition against Canada.

The Continental Congress, 16th September, 1776, resolved to raise by enlistment, 88 battalions† of troops, to serve during the war. Of these, 15 were to be raised by Massachusetts. The proportion of Abington was 46 men. To encourage enlistments, the town, 3d March, 1777, voted to each soldier a bounty of £24, in addition to the state and continental pay. From the records in the secretary's office, at Boston, it appears, that the whole number required were raised. 11 belonged to Abington, and 35 to other places.

February 26, 1778. The States were required to fill up their respective battalions, by enlistments for 9 months. The quota of Abington, 8 men, were procur-

\* See Appendix C.

† Under a new organization of the army, that took effect 1st January, 1781 these battalions were changed into regiments.



ed for the town by a committee, consisting of the militia officers and others.

23d March, 1778. 'The town 'voted to provide shirts, shoes and stockings, for 46 men.'

26th June, 1780. Voted 'to raise £30,000, (in the paper money of the day,\*) to hire soldiers for *six* months, to join Gen. Washington's army,' in compliance with a resolve of the General Court of 5th of June previous. The committee chosen to procure the men, were empowered to agree to pay them 'in paper money or silver money, or produce.' Abington enlisted 14 men under this resolve.

11th October, 1780. Voted to raise 'one hundred thousand pounds, to pay soldiers, and purchase beef to supply the continental army.'

2d December, 1780, the town was required to raise 16 men, to serve 3 years, or during the war. The following extract from the selectmen's return, dated 21st January, 1782, shows a compliance with the order.— 'The town, immediately upon receiving the orders for raising them, assembled in legal town meeting, and voted, as an encouragement to said men, that they should be paid *one hundred dollars* upon their passing muster; and that, in addition to the state wages, they should be paid *three pounds* by the town, *for every month* they should serve. Accordingly, they have paid the hundred dollars down to each man, and now stand obligated to said soldiers for the fulfilment of their agreement with them.' The names of the persons enlisted are subjoined to the return. To raise them, the inhabitants were divided into 16 classes. Each class procured one man,

\* See Appendix D.



and raised the money to pay his bounty and wages, which the town afterwards reimbursed.

January 18, 1781. Voted 'to raise *eighteen hundred dollars, in silver or gold*, for a bounty or advance pay for our continental soldiers, that shall be procured for three years, or during the war.' 14th February following, it was voted to assess the above sum immediately, to be paid in by 1st May.

The officers from Abington, in the continental service, were—

Jacob Pool, Captain.

Luke Bicknell, Captain.

John Ford, Lieutenant.

David Jones, jr. Surgeon.

Among those who died in the service, are the following—

George Bennett,

Nathaniel Bicknell, jr.

James Clark,

Gershom, son of Benjamin Farrow,

Samuel Green,

David, son of Benjamin Gardner,

Thomas Hunt, jr.

Solomon, son of Samuel Nash,

David, son of Peter Nash,

Jacob Noyes, jr.

Moses, son of deacon John Noyes,

Prince Palmer,

Abner Porter, jr.

Nathaniel, son of Whitcomb Pratt,

Abel, son of James Reed,

Cuff Rozarer,

Jesse Stoddard,  
Thomas White,  
Jonathan, son of Thomas Whitmarsh.

The services of the militia were, perhaps, more important and expensive, than those of the continental troops raised by the town. Immediately after Bunker hill battle, a company, consisting of 58 non-commissioned officers and privates, enlisted for 8 months, and served at Roxbury. The officers were, William Reed, Captain, Samuel Brown, Lieutenant, David Cobb, Ensign. Various other tours of duty were performed at different times, and for different periods of service, either about Boston, or at Rhode Island, in 1777-78-80 and 81. Almost every man in town capable of bearing arms, was in the service, for a longer or shorter time.

## REPRESENTATIVES.

The town does not appear to have been represented in the Legislature before 1735; and afterwards not until 1753. The following list has been mostly taken from the general court records. It became necessary to resort to them, as there is no record in the town books of the choice of any representative, except the first in 1735, until 1796.

- 1735. Samuel Pool, Esq.
- 1753. Mr. Jacob Porter.
- 1754. Mr. Jacob Porter.
- 1755. —————
- 1756. Mr. Jacob Porter.
- 1757. —————
- 1758. Mr. Jacob Porter.
- 1759. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1760. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1761. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1762. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1763. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1764. —————
- 1765. Dea. Samuel Pool.
- 1766. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1767. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1768. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1769. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.

- 1770. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1771. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.\*
- 1772. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1773. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1774. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.

Delegates to the 1st Provincial Congress, at Salem,  
October 5, 1774,

Capt. Woodbridge Brown,  
Dr. David Jones.

To the 2d, at Cambridge, 1st February, 1775,  
Capt. Woodbridge Brown.

To the 3d, at Watertown, 31st July, 1775,  
Dr. David Jones.

#### REPRESENTATIVES CONTINUED.

- 1776. Capt. Woodbridge Brown.
- 1777. Capt. William Reed.
- 1778. Dea. Samuel Pool.
- 1779. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1780. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1781. Lieut. Samuel Brown.
- 1782. Lieut. Samuel Brown.
- 1783. Lieut. Samuel Brown.
- 1784. Lieut. Samuel Brown.
- 1785. Lieut. Samuel Brown.
- 1786. Lieut. Samuel Brown.
- 1787. Jacob Smith, Esq.
- 1788. Jacob Smith, Esq.

\* Hutchinson, in a note in the 3d volume of his History of Massachusetts, says,—‘The principal friends of the British administration in the Legislature, were, Israel Williams, John Worthington, John Murray, Josiah Edson, Timothy Woodbridge, William Williams, Thomas Gilbert, and Edward Hartwell. On the other side, the Representatives of Boston, with Joseph Hawley, James Warren, Jerathmiel Bowers, James Prescott, John Whitcomb, Joseph Gerrish, William Heath, Woodbridge Brown, Thomas Gardiner, Timothy Danielson, and Thomas Dennie.’

- 1789. Jacob Smith, Esq.
- 1790. Jacob Smith, Esq.
- 1791. Jacob Smith, Esq.
- 1792. Col. Luke Bicknell.
- 1793. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1794. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1795. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1796. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1797. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1798. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1799. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1800. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1801. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1802. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1803. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1804. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1805. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1806. Col. Aaron Hobart.
- 1807. Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1808. Rev. Samuel Niles.
- 1809. Rev. Samuel Niles.
- Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1810. Rev. Samuel Niles.
- Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1811. Rev. Samuel Niles.
- Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1812. Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- James Bates, Esq.
- 1813. Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1814. Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1815. Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.
- 1816. Nathan Gurney, jr., Esq.

1817.	}	not represented.
1818.		
1819.		
1820.		
1821.		Nathan Gurney, Esq.
1822.	}	not represented.
1823.		
1824.		
1825.		
1826.		
1827.		Jared Whitman, Esq.
1828.		Benjamin Hobart, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq.
1829.		James Bates, Esq.
1830.		James Bates, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq.
1831.		James Bates, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq. John Cushing, Esq.
1832.*		James Bates, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq. John Cushing, Esq.
1833.		James Bates, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq. John Cushing, Esq.
1834.		James Bates, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq. John Cushing, Esq.
1835.		James Bates, Esq. Micah Pool, Esq.

\* In 1831, the Constitution was so altered, as to change the commencement of the political year from the last Wednesday in May, to the first Wednesday in January; and the time of electing Representatives, from May, to the 2d Monday in November.



- John Cushing, Esq.  
 1836. John Cushing, Esq.  
 1837. Not represented.  
 1838. James Bates, Esq.  
       Mr. Harvey Torrey.  
 1839. Mr. Harvey Torrey.  
       Elihu Hobart, Esq.  
       James Ford, jr., Esq.

Woodbridge Brown, delegate to the Convention held at Faneuil Hall, in Boston, 22d September, 1768.\*

Dr. David Jones, delegate to the convention at Concord, in 1779, assembled to take into consideration the depreciated state of the currency.

Dr. David Jones, delegate to the convention at Cambridge, in September, 1779, to form a state constitution.

Rev. Samuel Niles, delegate to the convention at Boston, in 1783, to act on the ratification of the Federal Constitution.

Nathan Gurney and Jared Whitman, Esqrs., delegates to the convention assembled at Boston, November 15th, 1820, to revise the constitution of the Commonwealth.

\* Gov. Bernard, in June, 1763, had prorogued and then dissolved the General Court, because they refused to rescind, as they were required to do, the Resolution, which gave birth to the circular letter from the House of Representatives to the legislative assemblies of the other colonies. Application was made to the governor, to convene them again, but he declined doing it without the express order of the king. A large body of troops had been ordered to Boston, to enforce the various acts of trade, at the point of the bayonet. In this very critical state of affairs, at the instance of the town of Boston, delegates from 96 towns and 8 districts, met at Faneuil Hall. Being a voluntary assembly, and of course without power, all they could do was to state their grievances 'felt and feared.' Beside addressing the people, they sent an able letter to Mr. Debert, agent of the province, in England, and a petition to the king, which they desired the agent to deliver with his own hand. The convention sat about a week. The day after their adjournment, two British regiments arrived at Boston, and before the end of the year, the town was garrisoned by about 4000 regular troops.

## MISCELLANEOUS PROCEEDINGS OF THE TOWN.

The first town meeting was held 2d March, 1713.  
The town officers then chosen were—

William Hersey, Moderator.

William Hersey, }  
William Tirrill, } Selectmen.  
William Reed, }

William Reed, Town Clerk.

James Nash, Town Treasurer.

Joseph Josselyn, Constable.

Edmund Jackson, }  
Nicholas Porter, } Surveyors of Highways.

Ebenezer Whitmarsh, }  
Edward Bates, } Fence-Viewers.

7th March, 1715. William Hersey, William Reed, Joseph Lincoln and Nicholas Shaw, were chosen a committee with the Selectmen ‘to lay out ways, where it shall be most convenient, with least damage.’

5th March, 1716. Voted, ‘That every man sixteen years old and upwards, shall kill twelve black-birds, or pay two shillings to the town charge, more than their part.’

1st August, 1716. A Lecture day, ‘the town voted, that the town rate should be six pounds.’

5th March, 1721. Samuel French, James Nash and

Joseph Lincoln, were chosen Trustees of the money loaned the town, by the Province.

4th March, 1723. Jeremiah Hatch was appointed Pound-keeper, with 'liberty to make use of his Barn in the room of a Pound.'

2d March, 1724. Voted, 'That the Drinkwater people\* shall have liberty to make a Pound upon their own cost, and Isaac Hatch was chosen keeper of said Pound.'

5th September, 1726. 'Licutenant William Reed, Mathew Pratt, Edward Bates and Samuel Noyes, were chosen a committee to draw up objections, in answer to the Drinkwater people's petition to draw off from them.' And it was voted, that 'Mathew Pratt and Samuel Noyes should carry the answer to the court.'

This remonstrance against setting off a part of the town to Hanover, a copy of which is before me, states that there were then in Abington 53 heads of families. Five of them had been then lately married, and had 'neither house nor home, but as they sojourned under the roofs of others.' Six were widows, 'whose families were much reduced and in low circumstances,' leaving but 34 'to support the public charges.' That the town contained a considerable tract of land, yet that little of it was capable of settlement, except the easterly part, 'which was chiefly in gentlemen proprietors' hands, who did neither sell nor settle their lands, they living in other towns.' That the eight petition-

\* The people here referred to, lived in the neighborhood of Drinkwater river, now in Hanover and Hanson. According to tradition, this river derived its name, from the circumstance, that the first mill upon it, was raised without the use of ardent spirits.

ers\* were 'but about four miles distant from the Meeting-house—and if it were objected, that the way was difficult and impassable, yet several responsible men had offered to make it good and passable for horse and man, for £5 charge.'

17th April, 1727. Voted, That Mr. Mathew Pratt, Dea. Samuel French, Dea. Edward Bates, Mr. Samuel Pool and Samuel Noyes, 'be agents to meet the committee,† that are appointed by the General Court to view our town, in order to take off the petitioners of the east part of said town, and to offer the reasons, they shall agree upon, why the town are not willing they should be set off.'

28th March, 1735. Christopher Dyer and Obadiah Reed, were chosen 'to agree with the Selectmen of Braintree, about the line between our town and Braintree, and renew the line with them, as they think best, if they will not exact the line, they have sued our town for.' Also, 'to indemnify and clear Nicholas Shaw, Jacob Reed and Edmund Jackson of all charges, that shall arise, about their being sued by Braintree, if our town do not stand a trial with them, in the law. Jacob Ford entered his *contrary detest* against the proceedings of the meeting.'

\* They were, Elijah Cushing, Jeremiah Hatch, Nathaniel Davis, Joseph Bryant, Job Otis, Nehemiah Cushing, Benjamin Loring and Isaac Hatch.

† This viewing Committee were, Lieut. Gov. Tailor and Elisha Cooke, Esq., of the Council, and Ezra Bourne, Esq., Maj. Tileston and Edward Arnold, Esq., of the House. They reported in favor of the petitioners, although they said 'it would put the Inhabitants of Abington under some difficulties, respecting their supporting the public worship of God, for that several large tracts of land within the town, did not pay towards the maintenance of the minister.' Abington afterwards petitioned for leave to tax the 'dormant lands,' and for a grant of 'a small piece of Province land in the north-east of the town, called *Waldo's farm*.' Their request was so far granted as to allow the town to tax the dormant lands an half-penny an acre for three years. The tax was to be applied to the support of the ministry.

17th November, 1735. Voted, ‘to send a Petition to the General Court, that we may be eased upon the Province taxes.’ The Petition was presented and a Resolve passed thereon, 13th January, 1736, ‘That the sum of £32 16s. be granted and paid out of the public Treasury to the Selectmen of Abington, to re-imburse the like sum, they had paid as a fine for not sending a Representative, *anno* 1734, and what they were over charged in the Province tax.’

31st May, 1736. ‘It was put to vote, whether the town would do any thing towards taking care of Simeon Nash, and fitting up a place at his house or at the School-house, and it was voted in the affirmative. And the town passed a vote, that they would do nothing for him, provided he was carried to Weymouth—and the town chose Esquire Pool and Jacob Reed to go and tell Simeon Nash’s wife, what they had agreed upon at the meeting.’

7th March, 1737. Voted, ‘That any person, that shall kill any grown wild cat this year, within our town, shall have twenty shillings.’

22d May, 1738. Voted, to petition the General Court ‘for a straight line *from Accord Pond to Angle Tree.*’

31st March, 1741. Voted, ‘That *the manufactory money* shall pay our town charges this year.’\*

28th May, 1744. Mr. William Sprague was chosen ‘to carry in a Petition to the General Court, *to have a line stretched from Accord Pond to Angle Tree.*’

26th May, 1746. The town voted off ‘a part of their

\* See Appendix E.

township to a number of Petitioners.' The part taken off was at the south end of the town. It was annexed to the corners of four of the neighboring towns to form, what was for many years called, *Tunk Parish* in Pembroke, now Hanson.

27th December, 1748. Lieut. Ephraim Spooner was chosen to meet delegates from other towns, at 'Mr. Silvester's in Hanover, to see if they can put a stop, to the speedy building of a Court House at Plymouth.'

20th August, 1750. Voted, 'to send in a Petition to the great and General Court, in order to see, if the court will take off the fines, laid upon us in the years 1749 and 1750.'

27th June, 1751. Voted, 'that Woodbridge Brown should have that half acre of land, that the old Meeting-house now stands on ;'—he paying Peter Nash for the land to sit the new one on.

27th November, 1753. Voted, 'to join with Braintree, to send a Petition unto the General Court, to see if the court will settle the Patent line, between Braintree and Abington.' Afterwards, in the same year, an agent was appointed 'to answer a law suit commenced against Abington by Braintree, and carry on a law suit against Braintree, in order to settle the Colony line, which is the bounds between said towns.'

14th May, 1753. Voted, 'that the foxes shall be killed, and he that kills them shall have two shillings per head, for grown ones.'

16th May, 1754. Voted not to set off 'the south-east corner of the town to Pembroke.'

5th September, 1756. Voted, 'that the men that went unto *Nova-Scotia*, shall draw the money out of



the Treasury for the tax, that was laid upon their heads.' These men were with Col. Winslow.

10th January, 1760. 'The town chose Dr. David Jones to purchase a bell of about 600 lbs. weight.'

28th December, 1761. Voted, '*that John White, a neutral Frenchman,\** should receive out of the Treasury two shillings per week, for keeping his mother.'

25th August, 1766. Dr. Jones, Capt. Ebenezer Reed and Mr. Ebenezer Whitmarsh, were chosen a committee 'to give the Representative instructions, relative to making good the damage done in Boston, to a number of gentlemen.' This refers to the damages in August, 1765, to the office and dwelling-house of the distributor of stamped paper, and the house and other property of Gov. Hutchinson.

8th January, 1770. Voted, 'to accept of the Meeting-house bell, that was new run by Mr. Aaron Hobart.'

25th May, 1775. Voted, 'that it was an indecent way, that the female sex do sit in their hats and bonnets, to worship God in his house; and offensive to many of the good people of this town.' Before this censure upon fashion, it had been the custom for females as well as males, to sit in meeting uncovered. Our fathers' notions of decorum might be very proper, in the abstract. If, however, personal comfort had been regarded, it might have been thought, that in the spacious unwarmed Meeting-houses of former days, all, who did not believe in the utility of 'mortifying the body for the sins of the soul,' would have felt the necessity of covering the head, at least in winter.

\* See Appendix F

February 11th, 1777. The currency of the country being in a state of rapid depreciation, the town agreed on the prices of labor, provisions, and various articles of merchandize—a list is on record.

1st June, 1778. 'It was put to vote, to see if the town would accept of the constitution; and it passed in the negative.' This was the constitution agreed upon by the council and house of representatives in convention, February 28th, 1778. The principal objections to it were, the want of a bill of rights, and not vesting the executive powers exclusively in the Governor.

2d August, 1779. Voted 'to accept and put in force the resolves of the state convention, that met at Concord on the 14th of July,' to adopt measures relative to the depreciation of the currency.

29th May, 1780. The town voted their acceptance of the constitution agreed on by the convention, but were for so modifying the 3d article in the bill of rights, as to allow every one to pay his money for the support of public worship, where he attended. They were, also, for limiting the number of counsellors and senators to 34.

6th September, 1781. The constables were ordered to receive for taxes, 'one new emission dollar, in the room of 40, old emission.'

25th September, 1786, a meeting was holden to act on a circular letter from the selectmen of Boston, relative to 'the commotions in the commonwealth.' The following votes were passed—

1. 'That the exhorbitant salary given the Governor, is a grievance.

2. That the money raised by excise and impost, not being appropriated to the discharge of our foreign debt and interest, is a grievance.

3. That the fee-table being so high, is a grievance.

4. That having four inferior courts, in this county, when two might answer the same purpose, is a grievance.

5. That we esteem it a grievance, that a debtor should be exposed to be confined in jail, when he has real estate to satisfy the creditor's demand.

6. That we will inviolably adhere to our happy constitution, and ever seek for redress of any grievances, that may exist, in some orderly way.'

9th June, 1788. Voted 'that no person shall set up any cake or cakes, or any thing in imitation of cakes, or throw any stones or sticks at them, within half a mile of the meeting house, each way on the public road, or on the green, near the meeting house. Any person so offending, shall pay a fine of 5 shillings, for the use of the town.' It is not very apparent, what was the object of this attempt at legislation. It might have been, to check, on town meeting days, a practice, the tendency of which was, to promote in the young a spirit of gambling.\*

14th January, 1793. Mr. Niles, Col. Hobart, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, were appointed a committee to prepare instructions to the representative, regarding the repeal of the then law against theatrical exhibitions.—

\* This vote reminds of a law of the Old Colony, in 1669, prohibiting all persons, going to or coming from the meeting house on the sabbath, from smoking tobacco, within two miles of the meeting house, under a penalty of 12 pence.

Their report is said to be on file—but, like most of the many other reports made to the town, is not to be found.

1st April, 1793. Voted ‘that all persons that suffer their dog or dogs to go to meeting, at the meeting house, when the people assemble for public worship, shall pay the same fine as is provided for breach of the sabbath.’ This is another attempt at legislation.

11th March, 1805. Voted ‘to divide the town of Abington into two separate towns; 68 in favor of a division, and 47 against it.’ At the same time, a committee of five persons, not residents of the town, were appointed, to run the dividing line.

6th April, 1807. The town refused to ‘vote off Aaron Hobart and others, as a separate religious society in the south part of the town’; and appointed Daniel Lane, jr. and John King, Esqrs., agents to attend the Legislature, and oppose their petition to be set off.

15th September, 1812. The town adopted a preamble and resolves, reported by a committee, relative to the war, then recently declared against Great Britain. In these, the war, which had been waged against ‘paper blockades,’ in derogation of our rights as a neutral nation, and against the British claim of a right to impress her own seamen out of American vessels on the ocean, and her practice, under that claim, of impressing naturalized and native American citizens, was declared to be both *just* and *necessary*. The town pledged their support in carrying it on—inculcated obedience to the constitution and laws of the land—deprecated all opposition to the war in the shape of mobs,

and all measures that tended in any way to destroy the union of the states, &c. &c.

5th April, 1813. Certain rules, eleven in number, were adopted by the town, for the regulation and orderly government of their town meetings.

5th April, 1819. The towns in Plymouth County were required, by a resolve of the Legislature, passed on several petitions presented, to vote on the question of establishing a new county town. In Abington, there were 196 in favor of the measure, and 6 against it.

9th March, 1835. Voted 'to build a house for holding future town meetings in.' Subsequently, it was agreed to build the house on a half acre of land given by Capt. Thomas Hunt, and situated on the northerly side of the road, near Jesse Dunham's. The cost of the house was about \$3,000.

## SELECTMEN.

The Selectmen were generally, if not without exception, Assessors. To avoid repetition, their names are given, the first year they were chosen, and the number of years they served, without noticing the yearly changes.

1713.	William Hersey,	2
1713.	William Tirrill,	2
1713.	William Reed,	10
1714.	Samuel Porter,	3
1714.	Edmund Jackson,	1
1715.	Andrew Ford,	1
1715.	Edward Bates,	10
1716.	Samuel French,	7
1716.	James Nash,	2
1718.	Nicholas Noyes,	1
1718.	Samuel Pool,	6
1719.	Joseph Josselyn,	1
1719.	Samuel Noyes,	1
1720.	Joseph Lincoln,	2
1720.	Hezekiah Ford,	1
1721.	Edmund Jackson,	3
1723.	James Nash,	1
1728.	Mathew Pratt,	1
1728.	Jacob Reed,	8
1729.	Joshua Shaw,	11



1729.	Samuel Jackson,	3
1730.	Samuel Reed,	2
1730.	Thomas Tirrill,	1
1733.	Christopher Dyer,	4
1734.	Nicholas Shaw,	3
1735.	Ebenezer Bates,	1
1735.	Obadiah Reed,	8
1736.	Jacob Porter,	3
1737.	Joseph Hersey,	4
1739.	John Noyes,	12
1740.	Ephraim Spooner,	8
1744.	Daniel Reed,	15
1752.	Nathaniel Pratt,	1
1755.	Woodbridge Brown,	11
1756.	Samuel Norton,	8
1758.	Samuel Pool,	6
1760.	David Jones,	6
1763.	Josiah Torrey,	10
1771.	William Reed, jr.	4
1772.	Samuel Brown,	5
1775.	Joshua Howe,	5
1775.	Benjamin Bates, jr.	3
1775.	Joshua Shaw,	3
1778.	Daniel Reed,	2
1780.	Daniel Shaw,	12
1780.	Jacob Smith,	11
1783.	Jacob Pool,	10
1785.	Luke Bicknell,	1
1786.	Jacob Dyer,	1
1786.	Thomas Reed,	1
1786.	Edward Cobb,	1
1790.	Josiah Torrey,	4

1792.	Benjamin Thaxter,	1
1793.	Nathaniel Howe,	1
1794.	Ephraim Noyes,	6
1794.	Daniel Lane, jr.	13
1798.	Samuel Norton,	12
1799.	Noah Ford,	1
1799.	Nathan Gurney, jr.	24*
1806.	William Wales,	10
1813.	Micah Pool,	11
1816.	James Bates,	12
1819.	Jared Whitman,	5
1821.	John Cushing,	9
1824.	David Beal,	14
1830.	Asaph Dunbar,	1
1833.	Joseph Cleverly,	6
1833.	Spencer Vining.	6

\* Of the above period of service 22 years were in succession. Mr. Gurney now resides in Boston, and is a member of the Board of Aldermen, and also a member of the Senate for the County of Suffolk.

## TOWN CLERKS.

William Reed,	from 1713 to 1718, both years included.
Edward Jackson,	1719 to 1723.
Samuel Noyes,	1724 to 1729.
Jacob Reed,	1730.
Thomas Tirrill,	1731.
Jacob Reed,	1732 to 1749.
Woodbridge Brown,	1750 to 1754.
Josiah Torrey,	1755.
Woodbridge Brown,	1756 to 1777.
Samuel Brown,	1778 to 1783.
Luke Bicknell,	1784 to 1793.
Richard Briggs,	1799.
Luke Bicknell,	1800 to 1814.
Samuel Norton,	1815 to 1820.
Ezekiel Thaxter,	1821 to 1832.
John Nash.	1833.



# APPENDIX.

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## A.

### OLD AND NEW STYLE.

To explain double dating, some account is necessary of the old and new style.

The solar year, being the exact time in which the sun moves from one equinox to the same again, is equal to 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 50 seconds. As that period did not consist of a number of entire days, Julius Cæsar ordered, that in every period of 4 years, 3 of the years succeeding each other should contain 365 days, and the 4th, 366. The additional day in the latter year was to be added to the 23d of February, and that day reckoned twice. As the Romans had, therefore, *two sixth* days, preceding the calends of March, that year was called (from *bis* and *sextus*) a *Bissextile* year.

As the addition of one day in 4 years was too much, by 44m. 44s. amounting to one entire day in about 129 years, the vernal equinox was constantly falling back, so that in 1751, instead of occurring about the 20th, it fell on the 9th or 10th of March, making the difference between the solar and civil year, about 11 days.

This mode of reckoning, called the *Julian style*, prevailed in England and the colonies, until 1752, when, by an act of parliament passed the preceding year, the alterations in the calendar, made by *Pope Gregory 13th* in 1582, were adopted. The act provided, that in future the year should commence the 1st of January, instead of the 25th of March, according to the old style, and in order that the equinoxes and solstices should fall at the same time in the civil year, the 3d of September, 1752, was to be reckoned the 14th, the intermediate days being suppressed ; and the years 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, and 2300, or any other hundredth year to come, except every 4th hundredth year, the year 2000 to be the first, were not to be bissextile or leap years, but common years, consisting of 365 days—and the years 2000, 2400, 2800, and every 4th hundredth year from the year 2000 inclusive, and all other years, which, according to the Julian style, were bissextile years, were to be bissextile or leap years, of 366 days.

As the Gregorian style had been adopted by most of the nations on the continent of Europe, and by Scotland, long before 1752, and was in common though not legal use in England and the colonies, it was the practice there and here, in regard to dates between the 1st of January and the 25th of March, to state the year, as in the passage from whence reference hereto is made, according both to the old and new style. In dates before 1752, we have given the year according to the latter.



## B.

### PROVINCIAL PAPER MONEY.

To understand the real compared with the nominal value of the circulating medium of the country, before the revolutionary war, requires some knowledge of the paper currency of the times.

Sir William Phipps's disastrous expedition against Canada, in 1690, was attended with great expense to the Province. As his success had been confidently anticipated, no adequate provision had been made to pay the troops on their return; in consequence of which, there were symptoms of mutiny among them. In this exigency, resort was had to an issue of *bills of credit*, as a substitute for money, to be redeemed at the end of the year by a tax. The first and subsequent issues were punctually redeemed until 1704, when the General Court were induced to defer the taxes pledged for their redemption for two years, and afterwards for longer periods. Beside the emissions for ordinary purposes, there were others by way of loans to the towns. In 1727, £60,000 were loaned, to be drawn in by a tax of £12,000 in 1734, and a like sum in each of the four succeeding years.

All the various issues, under the different denominations of *old tenor*, *middle tenor*, and *new tenor*, 'slid down the same lapse of depreciation.'

In 1702, an ounce of coined silver was equal to 6s. 10d. in bills of credit.

1705,	7s.	1728,	18s.
1713,	8	1730,	20
1716,	9	1737,	26
1717,	12	1741,	28
1722,	14	1749,	60

The mischiefs of this fluctuating currency were complicated and extensive. All classes felt them, but especially money-lenders—public institutions supported by funds—clergymen, and all others who depended for a living on a stated income.\*

At the close of the war, which terminated in 1748, the nominal value of the paper money in circulation, was £2,200,000. Its real value when issued, about £400,000 sterling.

By an act passed December, 1748, provision was made for drawing into the Treasury all the outstanding bills of credit, and ascertaining the rate, in future, of coined silver.

It enacted, that after 31st March, 1750, the bills should be paid at the treasury in silver, at the rate of 45 shillings in bills of the old form and tenor, and 11 shillings and three pence in bills, either of the middle or new form and tenor, for *one piece of eight*.†

\* The Rev. Mr. Appleton, of Cambridge, in a note to a Fast sermon, in 1748, illustrated the wretched condition of the currency at that time, by stating the case of a widow then alive, whose husband died 40 years before, leaving her a legacy of £3 a year, in lieu of her dower. That sum, he said, would at the time of her husband's death, 'procure towards her support the following articles, viz. 2 cords of wood, 4 bushels of Indian corn, 1 bushel of rye, 1 bushel of malt, 50 pounds of pork, and 60 pounds of beef. Then, she could, at most, demand *seventeen shillings and three pence, new tenor*, which was but about one-eighth part of the original three pounds, and besure would not purchase more than half a quarter of the above necessities of life; and this she must take up with, because there was no remedy in law for her. And this was, in a measure, the deplorable case of many widows in the land.'

† The piece of eight was the name by which the Spanish dollar was then called.

The funds to redeem the bills were, the money voted by Parliament to reimburse the expenditures of the province, incurred in taking and securing Cape Briton,\* and a province tax of £75,000, which, in the way it was paid, was equal to about £30,000 sterling.

As this act was designed to put an end to paper money, and establish an invariable silver currency for the future, it provided, that after the 31st of March, 1750, all debts should be understood to be payable in coined silver, at the rate of *six shillings and eight pence per ounce*, the bills to be estimated at the rates established for their redemption by the province; and that all future debts should be payable in coined silver at the same rate. Three ounces of coined silver, the weight of three English crowns, were therefore equal to 20 shillings, or one pound, in the money of account.†

It is remarkable that this act, by which the most important interests of the public were promoted, and the principles of commutative justice settled on a firm basis, by the establishment of a sound and stable currency, was strongly opposed—attempts were even made to resist it by force.

\* In 1749, this money arrived at Boston, and was conveyed to the treasury. The sum was £183,649 2s. 7½d. sterling. ‘It consisted of 215 chests (3000 pieces of eight, at a medium, in each chest) of milled pieces of eight, and 100 casks of copper. There were 17 cart and truck loads of silver, and 10 truck loads of copper.’

† This is sometimes said to have been the origin of *lawful money*, but it is supposed to have had a much earlier date. Queen Anne, in 1704, by proclamation, declared that the *Seville, pillar, and Mexico pieces of eight*, should not pass in the colonies for more than 6 *shillings each*. An act of Parliament, in 1707, ‘for ascertaining the rates of foreign coin in her majesty’s plantations in America,’ and printed with the statutes of the province, corroborated by penalties the prohibition in the proclamation. Six shillings for the Spanish dollar thenceforth became the standard of reckoning, and the lawful money of the country.

C.

PLYMOUTH COUNTY CONGRESS.

The following is a list of the delegates to this Congress, from the several towns in the county.

*Abington*—Dr. David Jones, Capt. Woodbridge Brown, Mr. William Reed, jr.

*Bridgewater*—Capt. Edward Mitchell, Mr. Nathaniel Reynolds, Mr. Nathan Mitchell, Mr. Thos. Hooper.

*Duxbury*—Capt. Wait Wadsworth, Mr. George Partridge, Mr. Peleg Wadsworth.

*Halifax*—Mr. Barnabas Thompson, Mr. Moses Inglee, Mr. Ebenezer Thomas.

*Hanover*—Capt. Joseph Cushing, Mr. Joseph Ramsdell, Mr. Joshua Simmons, Capt. Robert Eells, Dr. Lemuel Cushing.

*Kingston*—John Thomas Esq., Capt. John Gray, Mr. William Drew.

*Marshfield*—Capt. Anthony Thomas, Capt. William Thomas.

*Middleborough*—Capt. Ebenezer Sprout, Mr. John Miller, Mr. Ebenezer Wood, Mr. Benjamin Tucker, Mr. Nathaniel Foster.

*Pembroke*—Capt. John Turner, Dr. Jeremiah Hall, Mr. Seth Briggs, Capt. Edward Thomas, Capt. Elijah Cushing.

*Plympton*—Mr. William Ripley, Mr. Samuel Lucas, Mr. Seth Cushing.

*Plymouth*—Hon. James Warren, Esq. (Chairman,) Mr. John Torrey, Capt. Theophilus Cotton, William Watson, Esq., Mr. Thomas Lothrop, (Clerk.)

*Rochester*—Capt. Ebenezer White, Mr. Nathaniel Hammond, Mr. Nathan Nye.

*Scituate*—Nathan Cushing, Esq., John Cushing, jr. Esq., Capt. Israel Vinal, jr., Mr. Barnabas Little, Mr. William Turner, Capt. Joseph Tolman.

*Wareham*—Mr. Ebenezer Briggs, Mr. Barnabas Bates.

This Congress met at Plympton, 26th September, 1774, and by adjournment, at the Court House, in Plymouth, the next day ; when the following preamble and resolves,\* well suited to the very critical state of the times, were unanimously adopted.

WHEREAS the British administration, instead of cultivating that harmony and affection, which have so long subsisted, to the great mutual advantage of both Britain and the colonies, have for a series of years, without provocation, without justice or good policy, in breach of faith, the laws of gratitude, the natural connections and commercial interests of both countries, been attacking with persevering and unrelenting injustice the rights of the colonists ; and have added from one time to another, insults to oppressions, till both have become (more especially in this colony,) intolerable, and every person who has the feelings of a man, and any sense of the rights of mankind, and the value of

\* They were reported by a committee, consisting of James Warren, Nathan Cushing, Joseph Cushing, John Thomas, David Jones, John Torrey, Thomas Lothrop, George Partridge, and Jeremiah Hall.

our happy constitution, finds it now necessary to exert himself, to the utmost of his power, to preserve them. We who are returned from the several towns in the county of Plymouth, and now met on the ground, first trod by our venerable ancestors, and at the place, providence directed them to, as an asylum from the persecuting rage and oppression of their contemporaries in Britain; feeling the same spirit, and actuated in defence of our rights, by the same principles which animated them in acquiring and transmitting them to us, and succeeding posterity, in a manner which ever distinguish the heroism and virtue of their characters, DO RESOLVE.

1. That the inhabitants of the American colonies, are intitled to all the natural rights of mankind, and are by right subject to the control of no power on earth, but by their own consent.

2. That the inhabitants of this province have no other political connection with, or dependance on Britain, than what was originally by our ancestors, for themselves and posterity, stipulated with the king, and in the form of a grant from him expressed in the charter.

3. That the interposition of any other power on earth in our affairs, and more especially in attempts to tax or even legislate for us—and that of the king himself, in any other manner than is expressed and provided for in the original compact, is an infraction of our natural and constitutional rights.

4. That the people of this province have at all times been loyal and dutiful subjects to the king of Great Britain, have observed all the conditions of their original compact, borne great affection to his other subjects,



in all parts of his dominions, and are ready, at all times, to render him that allegiance, which his protection of our rights entitle him to, and to sacrifice our lives and fortunes in defence of his person and constitutional government.

5. That the Parliament of Great Britain has not only assumed, but exercised with unexampled severity, a power over these colonies, to legislate for, and tax them without their own consent, and by several acts passed in the late session of parliament, for blocking up the port of Boston, the better regulating the government of the province of the Massachusetts Bay, the screening the most flagitious violators of the laws of the province from a legal trial, and the establishing the Roman Catholic religion in that extensive country called Canada, has shown their determination to deprive us of both our civil and religious rights.

6. That it is a duty every man, and body of men, owes to posterity, as well as to God and their country, to oppose with all their power the execution of said acts, and that we strongly recommend it to the inhabitants of the province, never to submit to them in any instance whatever.

7. That the provision made in one of said acts, for the appointment of a council and of civil officers, in this province, and the tenure of their several offices, together with the manner of returning jurors, at once destroys every idea of free legislation, and an impartial administration of justice, and breaks down that inestimable barrier of liberty, and security of life and property, a trial by our peers, by rendering the whole of them a set of ministerial tools and hirelings.

8. That those persons, who have accepted seats at the council board, by mandamus from the king, in conformity to a late act of the British parliament, have violated the fundamental rights of the society they belonged to, have traitorously attempted to destroy the constitution of their country, which they were bound by the laws of God and man to defend; and have, by their persevering obstinacy, against the entreaties of their fellow-countrymen, exposed themselves to their just resentment and indignation.

9. That the judges, justices, sheriffs, and other civil officers in the province, who were appointed to their several offices, agreeable to the charter and laws of the same, and refuse to act in conformity to the acts of parliament, or to assist administration in the execution of them, are the only proper persons who are entitled to the obedience of the people; and that we will aid and support them in the execution of their offices, in the manner usual, before the attempt to alter the constitution of the province, and indemnify their persons and property; and that no legal authority can remove them from their respective offices, except that which is constituted pursuant to the charter, and the laws of this province.

10. That all officers and private persons, who shall presume to conform to, or by any means aid and assist the execution of the late acts of parliament, do by such conduct forfeit that protection and friendship good men in society are entitled to, are and ought to be considered and treated as our inveterate enemies, as men lost to every sense of virtue, and the obligations due to God and man.

11. That every people have a right to meet together when they please, to consult upon their grievances, and the proper methods to be taken for their removal ; and that any act which prohibits such meeting, strikes at the foundation of freedom, and will reduce to slavery and misery such as submit to it.

12. That the present exigencies of our public affairs renders it absolutely necessary that there be a provincial congress ; and we do recommend it to the several towns in this county, to instruct their representatives to form themselves into such a congress, agreeable to the seventh resolve of the delegates for the county of Essex, for the purposes there mentioned.

13. That our enemies may be disappointed, and we be the better enabled to make that last appeal which the laws of God and nature will justify—We recommend it to the people of this county, to apply themselves with all diligence, and in the most effectual manner, to learn military discipline, and to equip themselves *immediately* with arms and ammunition according to law.

14. That whereas the present circumstances of the province are such, that if the public monies now raised should be paid into the public treasuries, they may be misapplied, perhaps, to purposes detrimental to the interest of the people—We therefore recommend to the collectors of taxes, sheriffs, and other officers in this county, to retain the same in their hands, and not to make any payment thereof to the province treasurer, until the civil government of the province is placed upon a constitutional foundation, or until it shall otherwise be ordered by the proposed provincial congress ; and

that they be indemnified in their persons and property for so doing.

15. That the fortifications erected on Boston neck, the seizing the powder in the magazine at Charlestown, the prohibiting the keeper of the magazine at Boston to deliver out powder which is private property, and many other instances of the conduct of the army and commander in chief, are justly alarming, and give us the strongest reasons to apprehend hostile intentions against the town of Boston in particular, and the province in general.

16. That if any persons who have distinguished themselves by virtuously contending for the violated rights and liberties of this country, should be seized, in order to be transported to England, or in any way subjected to the tyrannical power of administration now prevailing—We do recommend that the good people of this county immediately make reprisals, by seizing and keeping in safe custody, every servant of the present tyrannical government, and all such as are known to have favoured and abetted their measures, and detain them till our friends are restored safe and uninjured to their respective families.

17. That it is highly proper and necessary for the towns to continue to meet and transact their affairs as usual, and we recommend to the selectmen of the several towns in this county, to issue their warrants for calling town meetings, agreeable to the laws of the province, and former usages, and to the constables to warn the same, whenever their circumstances require it, and to the people in the county to support each other in the

exercise of a privilege and a right, by long experience found so beneficial to their interest and happiness.

18. That it is justifiable in, and proper for, the people at such a time as this, to prevent any courts sitting and proceeding to business, or any officer of any court executing his office, who shall refuse when requested to make and sign a full and ample declaration, expressing their abhorrence of the late innovations attempted in our constitution, and that they do not now, nor will at any time hereafter, hold their commissions in any other way, than what is prescribed by the charter and well known constitution of this province, and that they will not in any way countenance, aid or support the execution of the late acts of parliament.

19. That the circumstances of the country require and make it necessary that we should (until our rights are fully restored) withhold all commercial intercourse with Great Britain and Ireland, and refrain from the consumption of British manufactures and merchandize, especially East India teas, and other goods, subject to such additions, alterations and exceptions only, as the *Grand Congress* of the colonies may agree to.

20. We recommend to the several towns in this county, to make provision for, and to order the payment of their several representatives out of their town treasuries, in order to do justice to them, and at the same time defeat one of the machinations of our enemies.

21. That those justices of the courts of general sessions of peace and common pleas, for this county, who, at the last term, in the name of the whole, addressed his Excellency Governor GAGE, have therein, wantonly, without reason and without provocation, aspersed the



clergy, the committees of correspondence, and other good people of this county, and thereby shown that they have no tender feelings for the distresses of their country, and can rejoice at their calamities.

22. That this county should entertain a high sense of gratitude for the benevolent alacrity and readiness shewn by our brethren in the other colonies, to aid and support this province under our present distresses, and to come to our relief, whenever the blood-thirsty malice of our enemies shall make it necessary.

23. That Edward Winslow, jr. one of the two clerks of the court of general sessions of the peace, and court of common pleas, for this county, has, by refusing this body a copy of an address made at the last term in this county, to *Thomas Hutchinson*, Esq. betrayed the trust reposed in him, and by refusing his attendance when requested, treated the body of this county with insult and contempt, and by that means rendered himself unworthy to serve the county in said office.

24. That it be earnestly recommended to the inhabitants of this county, that they carefully avoid all riots, routs, tumults, and disturbances, under our present distressed circumstances, and that they maintain all that peace and good order that the nature of our present situation will admit.'

The congress met again at Plymouth, the 4th of October, the stated time for holding the courts of common pleas, and general sessions of the peace. They immediately sent to their courts a copy of their 18th resolve, and requested a compliance therewith. The justices soon after returned the following declaration, which was voted to be satisfactory.



WE the subscribers, justices of the Court of General Sessions of the Peace, and Court of Common Pleas for the County of Plymouth, do hereby express and declare our abhorrence and detestation of the late innovations attempted in our constitution, by sundry late acts of parliament; and that we do not now, nor will at any time hereafter, hold or exercise our commissions in any other way than what is prescribed by our charter and well known constitution; and that we will not in any way countenance, aid or support, the execution of the late acts of parliament, for altering the charter and government of this province. Thomas Foster, Gamaliel Bradford, Thomas Mayhew, Edward Winslow, Joseph Joselyn, Daniel Johnson, Briggs Alden, John Cushing, jr. Nathan Cushing, John Cotton, William Sever, Abijah White, Gideon Bradford, John Thomas, Nath'l Clapp, Pelham Winslow, Josiah Cushing, Nathan Howard.

After several messages between the two bodies, the congress voted it to be inexpedient for the courts to set at that time, or adjourn. At the same time, they required such of the justices as had been concerned in the addresses then recently made to Gov. Gage, and the late Gov. Hutchinson, to make, so far as was in their power, full and ample reparation for the 'asperisions cast' by them on the country. This, they said, could be done by nothing short of a written confession under their hands, of their misconduct.

To these proceedings, the courts returned this answer—

The Justices of the courts of General Sessions of the Peace and inferior court of Common Pleas, now

met at Plymouth, for the county of Plymouth, taking into consideration the great uneasiness the county in general is in, on account of the late oppressive acts of parliament, and agreeable to the request of a committee, from the body of the people, and the advice of the county congress, now assembled in Plymouth, do hereby declare, that we will not open, set, act or do, or adjourn either of said courts, till the determination of the continental congress is known.

By order of the Justices of the Courts of Common Pleas, and General Sessions of the Peace.

EDWARD WINSLOW, Clerk.

Plymouth, October 4, 1774.

The congress having been baffled in their various attempts to procure a copy of the address to Hutchinson, gave the justices who had signed it notice, that notwithstanding their failure, there was sufficient evidence that the address contained a full justification of Hutchinson's administration; and that they had therefore resolved, 'that the authors of it had shown a disregard to truth, as well as to the liberties and happiness of their country, and their acquiescence in that well known principle of Hutchinson, viz. the necessity of an abridgement of, what were called, English liberties.' This produced the following recantation, signed by all the justices who addressed the Governors.

WHEREAS, we the subscribers, at the last court of General Session of the Peace, and court of Common Pleas, held at Plymouth, &c. on the first Tuesday of July last, voted addresses to Governor Gage and Governor Hutchinson, WE do now solemnly declare, that

what induced us so to do, was the hopes, by means of their influence and assistance, we might get rid of the oppressive acts of parliament lately made, since which we are fully convinced that we were mistaken, and guilty of an error in judgment ; and are heartily sorry that we were any ways aiding or assisting therein ; and humbly ask the forgiveness of town, county, and province, that we may be reinstated in their esteem and favor, and hereby promise that we will not do any thing to enforce the late unconstitutional acts of parliament ; and wherein we have given offence to the clergy and committees of correspondence, we do hereby ask their forgiveness.

Thomas Foster, Gamaliel Bradford, Joseph Josselyn, Briggs Alden, Abijah White, Edward Winslow, Pelham Winslow, Gideon Bradford.

## D.

### REVOLUTIONARY PAPER MONEY.

When the revolutionary war began, the continental congress had no money, and having no power to lay taxes, their only resource was to issue bills of credit, and pledge the faith of the colonies for their redemption. This paper was, for a time, equal to gold and silver; but as the amount necessary to carry on the war very much exceeded the usual quantity of the circulating medium, and as no funds were provided for its redemption, the bills began and continued to depreciate, until finally, in the latter part of 1780, the whole gigantic mass ceased to circulate, and was 'quietly interred in its grave.'\*

The sums emitted at various times amounted to 200 millions of dollars. It would not be true, however, to suppose, that value to that amount was received by congress. To know what the bills were actually worth to the people when issued, it is necessary to know the date and amount of all the several emissions, and the depreciation at the time of the issue.

From these data, it appears, that all the bills of credit emitted by congress, were worth, in gold and silver,

\* By an act of congress passed 4th August, 1790, provision was made for redeeming this paper, at the rate of 100 in bills for 1 in specie. In this way 2 millions were made to redeem 200 millions.

36,367,719 dollars. If the like sum of 200 millions, supposed to have been issued by the states, be estimated in the same way ; and the revolutionary federal debt, foreign and domestic, be set at 43 millions, (it appeared by the report of a committee of congress at the close of the war, to be near that sum,) and the debts of the states at 25 millions, then the whole cost of independence to the people of the United States, would be about 140 millions of dollars.

## E.

### LAND BANK OR MANUFACTORY SCHEME.

In consequence of the deranged condition of the province currency, in the beginning of 1740 ; and with the professed design of providing a remedy for the great inconveniences, that were expected to arise from withdrawing from circulation, in 1741, all the various emissions of paper money, without substituting any other medium of trade than gold and silver, a company was formed for the purpose of issuing notes or bills of credit, on land security, to an amount not exceeding £150,000.\*

The subscribers for stock were to receive the sums subscribed in the notes of the company, and for security, mortgage to the directors' real estate to their satisfaction, with the condition to pay annually, for 20 years, 5 per cent. of the principal lent, and 3 per cent. interest, either in such notes or any of the following articles, the produce of the country, viz. 'hemp, flax, cordage, bar-iron, cast-iron, linen, sheep's wool, copper, tanned leather, flaxseed, bees-wax, baberry-wax, sail cloth or canvass, nails, tallow, timber or cord wood, and logwood, though from New Spain.' These articles were to be delivered

\* The amount of bills actually issued, in sums from 20 shillings down to 3 pence, was £49,250 10s.



to the directors, or their agents, to be by them employed in trade.

There were 863 partners in this scheme. About 400 belonged to Boston, and the rest to various towns throughout the province. In Abington, there were 3, if not more, viz. Hezekiah Ford, Ebenezer Josselyn, and William Tirrill.

This scheme was obnoxious to Gov. Belcher, and great exertions were made to crush it.

In July, 1740, he issued a proclamation, warning the people not to receive or pass the notes of the company, because, as was alleged, their circulation would tend 'to defraud men of their estates, and disturb the peace and order of the people.'

Another proclamation was issued in November, in which all officers of the militia were cautioned against giving currency, in any way, to this paper, under a penalty of dismission from office.

Circular letters were addressed to the courts of General Sessions of the Peace, desiring them 'to caution all such as were taverners, retailers, and common victuallers, against passing or receiving any of these bills;' and requesting them not to grant licenses to such as might 'despise government, and disturb peace and good order, contrary to the nature and design of their office.'

By a vote of the council, no attorney, or counsellor, was to be permitted to appear before them, in that capacity, who should pass, receive, or give encouragement to the circulation of land bank money.

The opposition to the bank was made to bear upon the legislature. In May, 1741, the house of representatives chose for their speaker, Samuel Watts, Esq. one

of the directors of the bank, and thirteen new counselors, who were directors or partners, or were supposed to be favorers of it. The Governor, in the exercise of his prerogative, negatived their appointment. And so much, indeed, was he piqued at these elections, that the next day he sent a message and dissolved the legislature.

These great efforts to prevent the currency of this money, doubtless had some effect ; but a large portion, and probably a majority of the people, were disposed to sustain the bank. It therefore became necessary, in the Governor's estimation, to execute the threats contained in his proclamations.

Accordingly, many judicial and military officers were removed from office. Among the former, were Samuel Adams, (father of the late Gov. Adams,) and William Stoddard, of Boston, Samuel Watts, of Chelsea, Robert Hale, of Beverly, John Choate, of Ipswich, and George Leonard, of Norton. They, with Robert Auchmuty, of Roxbury, Peter Chardon, of Boston, and Thomas Cheever, of Lynn, were at the time, directors of the bank. Leonard was removed from two offices—that of justice of the peace, and judge of the inferior court of common pleas for the county of Bristol. It is not known that any one was removed from office in Plymouth county, excepting Elkanah Leonard, Esq. of Middleborough.

The strong measures taken by the Governor, on the one hand, to put down this currency, and by the bank and its friends on the other, to sustain it, were leading on the people to disturbances of the public peace. Information was given the executive, of movements tend-

ing to such an issue, in the counties of Suffolk and Plymouth. To ascertain their character and object, several persons were examined under oath, before the Governor and Council.

The following extracts from some of the testimony, mostly taken 11th and 12th of May, 1741, shows the existence of a combination to enforce the circulation of the prohibited currency, by violent means.

Seth Cushing, of Hingham—‘On the 3d inst. being Lord’s day, John Lewis asked him, whether he had heard any thing of the dreamers—and said he had heard that there was to be a mob at Boston, the 19th instant; and that he had heard, that 1000 men would rise in Boston, and 20,000 in the country, and that they had now got the dream in writing. And said Cushing said, he had heard several men, whose names he cannot remember, say, that they would come to Boston, and if corn was there, and the merchants would not let them have it, they would throw them into the dock.’

Samuel Bates, jr., of Weymouth—‘had heard a report in that town, of a confederacy in the country of about 5000 men, who designed to come to Boston to know the reason why there was not a currency for land bank money; and that Samuel Bates, senior, assured him that he saw a paper to this purpose, and that David French carried it to Abington, last night.’

Robert Brown, of Plymouth—stated, that the week before, he was in Kingston, and there met one Latham, from Bridgewater, of middle age, who asked him if he would take land bank money for corn. He said if he would, his house would stand. The declarant asked him what he meant, but got no answer. He further

stated, that on the Monday before, one Nathaniel Cobb, of Plympton, said in his house, at Plymouth, that 300 men had signed.

Deacon Thomas Josselyn, of Hanover—‘At Capt. Thomas Bardin’s, in said town, he met Joseph Gurney, of Abington, on the 2d of May, inst. as he remembers, who told him there was a number of men, that were to come to Boston to buy corn, (as the declarant supposed) with land bank money, and upon the declarant’s discountenancing the affair, the said Gurney, after he left him, as Capt. Adam Cushing and Capt. Bardin informed him, cursed him, and called him *puppy*, because he was concerned in the land bank, and would not support it.’

Capt. Thomas Bardin—‘About five weeks ago, divers Abington men being at his house, made great complaints of the merchants at Boston, for imposing upon them in their trade, and seemed to be under discontent for want of a medium of trade. That about the 1st of May instant, there were divers Bridgewater and Abington men at his house, and among others, one Joseph Gurney, an Abington man, who asked the declarant, whether he was not acquainted with the design. Upon which, the declarant asked him—what design? He answered—to go to Boston to trade for corn, and asked, where would be the harm, if 500 men should go and behave themselves civilly? The declarant said, none at all, as he knew of. But, what is your design in going? He answered, to see if the merchants will trade with us, and we want you to go with us, for Capt. Adam Cushing, and Dr. White, (of Weymouth,) and Capt. Pierce, of Milton, will go with us. The declarant re-

plied, I doubt whether any of these persons will be concerned in that affair. Gurney, as well as the rest, said, this medium (meaning the manufacturing bills, as the declarant understood,) must pass. Gurney further said, you are in every man's mouth, and you must go with us.' 'One Spear, a Hanover man, in the company, told the declarant, that he must go on this business, for every body depended upon him, or words to that effect. The declarant was afterwards informed, that the names they gave their leaders were, *Little John*, *Robin Hood*, and *Whalebone*.'

William Royal, of Stoughton—'had heard a young man that came from Bridgewater, say, that the people at Bridgewater were very much engaged in the same affair, and that it was to be prosecuted the 19th inst.'

Immediately after these examinations, a warrant was issued by Edward Hutchinson, Jacob Wendell, and Anthony Stoddard, justices of the peace throughout the province, against Joseph Gurney\* and Nathaniel Spear. The charge against them was, for being concerned in a design and combination with a number of evil minded persons, to come into the town of Boston, in a tumultuous manner, tending to the disturbance and disquiet of his majesty's good subjects, and against the king's peace and dignity.'

Gurney was arrested, and on the 14th of May, brought before the Governor and council—but what was done is not known, though it is probable he was acquitted. A similar warrant was issued against other individuals.

\* Gurney was killed instantly, by the fall of a tree, in 1770, at the age of 71.

The promptness and energy of these proceedings, broke up the confederacy, and possibly saved the community from disorder and violence. Soon after, the company was dissolved by act of parliament\*; and in 1743, the general court took the settlement of their affairs out of the hands of the directors, and vested it in a board of commissioners. After the lapse of about 30 years, by means of assessments on the partners,† and a lottery, the concerns of the bank were brought to a close. Numerous traces, however, were left, of the ‘incurable confusion it had produced,’ and the ruin it had brought on individuals and families.

\* The elder President Adams, in one of the numbers of *Noranglus*, says, this act ‘raised a greater ferment in the province, than the stamp act.’ The objections were, to the right of parliament to pass such a law, and, admitting the right, to the character of some of its particular provisions. It is understood to have given the bill holders a right of action, against any partner, for the full sum expressed in the bills, with interest. As they had been issued for less than their nominal value, and many of the holders had received them at a great discount, the individual members of the company had some reason to complain of injustice, though so far as the company were concerned, it might not have been unreasonable that they should sustain some losses, by way of penalty, for their unwarrantable undertaking.

† Gov. Hutchinson says, in the 3d volume of his History of Massachusetts, that after the death of Samuel Adams, senior, his estate was advertised for sale by the sheriff, to pay a land bank debt. His son, the late governor, then a young man, attended the auction, and threatened to sue the officer if he proceeded in the sale, and all who should presume to enter on the estate under pretence of a purchase. ‘By intimidating both the sheriff and those persons who intended to purchase, he kept the estate in his own possession.’



## F.

### FRENCH NEUTRALS.

In the latter part of 1755, several transports arrived at Boston, with a large number of Acadians, or French inhabitants of Nova Scotia. No provision having been made for their support here, the legislature, then in session, ordered them to be distributed most conveniently among the towns, and directed the selectmen, or overseers of the poor, to receive, employ, and support them, so as to incur the least expense to the province. Nine persons were sent to Abington, viz. John White, his wife and six children, and Mary Laundry, probably his mother-in-law. This distribution among the towns was unequal, and, in 1760, a new one was made, according to their respective proportions of the province tax. As Abington had more than her share, six of this family were ordered to be removed—three to Freetown, and three to Berkly, in the county of Bristol. The order was never complied with, probably because it was not thought desirable to divide the family.\*

At the time these neutrals arrived, Gov. Shirley was absent on the Crown Point Expedition. On his return, the legislature made him an address, in which they spoke of these people. Alluding to their destitute con-

\* This family, while at Abington, lived at Capt. Elisha Hersey's, and at Jacob and David Porter's.

dition, they say, ‘their live stock, husbandry tools, and most of their household furniture, were left in the province of Nova Scotia; and very few of them brought with them any goods or estate of any kind.’ Their poverty, however, seems to have been less regarded, than the danger to be apprehended from their intermixture and association with our own people. ‘The receiving,’ they say, ‘among us so great a number of persons, whose gross bigotry to the Catholic religion is notorious, and whose loyalty to the king is suspected, is a thing very disagreeable to us.’ It was, probably, to avoid as much as possible the evil feared from this source, that an order was passed June, 1756, providing, ‘that none of the French neutrals should be permitted to travel from town to town, without leave first had of the selectmen, or overseers of the poor, certified in writing, or they may be stopped and returned by one or two English householders.’

The whole number of neutrals here, in 1760, is stated by Gov. Pownall, in a speech to the legislature, to have been 1017. The expense to the province of their support, to August, 1763, was £9563 sterling.

These people remained here till the close of the French war, in 1763, when they generally left the country. Some went to France, some to the West Indies, some to Canada, and a few returned to their native country.

A brief account of the causes of their removal, and some of the circumstances attending it, if not very appropriate, it is hoped may not be altogether uninteresting.

Nova Scotia, under the name of Acadia, was originally settled by the French. After the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, by which that country was ceded to Great Britain, many of the French inhabitants moved to Canada and elsewhere. Those who chose to remain, were permitted to retain their possessions, and allowed the free exercise of their religion, upon taking an oath of allegiance to the king of Great Britain, with a distinct understanding on their part, that they were not to be required to bear arms either against the French or Indians. This contract was afterwards renewed with their children, and so notorious was the compact, that they acquired the name of *French Neutrals*.

After the settlement of Halifax, commenced in 1749, (a measure which excited the jealousy of the French, and induced them to make incursions through the country of the neutrals, to annoy that place,) the then governor of the province, the more effectually to secure the loyalty of the Acadians, required them to take the oath of allegiance anew, and without any qualification whatever. This they objected to, as contrary to the conditions upon which their fathers agreed to settle under the British government; and they said, ‘if they should undertake to aid the English in suppressing the Indians, the savages would pursue them with unrelenting hostility—that neither they nor their children would be secure from their vengeance. That to bear arms against their countrymen, was a condition repugnant to the feelings of human nature. They, therefore, requested to be informed, if they chose the alternative of quitting their country, whether they would be permitted to sell their lands and personal effects.’ They were told in reply—‘that by the treaty of Utrecht, one year was allowed

them for disposing of their property, which period having elapsed, they could neither part with their effects, nor leave the province.'

Subsequently, and as a measure preparatory to their removal, they were disarmed, their records, title deeds and other papers, taken from them; and finally, after the Massachusetts troops\* under Lieut. Col. John Winslow, of Marshfield, had taken Beau-Sejour, and another fort on the river Gaspereaux, the provincial government secretly resolved to remove the whole body of the neutrals from the country, and disperse them among the other British provinces. It was probably thought better to send them to the other colonies as prisoners of war, than simply to exile them, as in the latter case, they might go to Canada, and there help recruit the strength of the enemy.

The reasons offered in justification of this measure, were, that the Acadians had refused to take the oath of allegiance, without the qualification before mentioned—that they had furnished the French and Indians intelligence, quarters and provisions, and that 300 of them were taken, with arms in their hands, at the capture of Beau-Sejour.

The execution of this resolution was confided to Col. Winslow. He issued a proclamation, requiring the French inhabitants in the various settlements, to appear at several specified places, on the same day. One portion was to assemble in the church, at Grand Prè, September 5th, 1755, at 3, P. M. In accordance with this

\* Several of Winslow's soldiers were from Abington. In the selectmen's book, under date June, 1757, is the following—'then paid Jonathan Torrey £2 14s. 2d. for the soldiers, that were rated in his rate bill, that went to Minas, according to a vote of the town.'

summons, 418 able bodied men entered the church, at the appointed time, and the doors were shut. The colonel then addressed them. ‘That part of duty he was then upon was very disagreeable to his natural make and temper, as he knew it must be grievous to them,’ &c. It was not, however, for him to animadvert, but to obey his orders, and he proceeded to inform them that ‘their lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds, and live stock of all sorts, were forfeited to the crown, with all their other effects, saving their money and household goods, and that they were to be removed from the province.’

The whole number, who were entrapped in this way at Grand Prè, and other places, with those who were hunted and taken from their hiding places in the depths of the forests, were 7000.

The sufferings of these unfortunate people, in the circumstances of their removal—in their passage to this country, and in their separate and scattered condition here, cannot well be conceived. From the enjoyment of a competency, and, in many instances, affluence, ‘in the beautiful prairies which they had diked out from the sea, and made fruitful and luxuriant fields,’ they were at once reduced to abject poverty, and obliged to depend, in their dispersion in a strange land, on public charity for the means of living.

All suffered, but not alike. The case of one Rene Le Blanc\* was peculiar. He had been a notary public in Nova Scotia. While in the service of the govern-

\* Col. Winslow, in a letter to the Governor of Nova Scotia, dated Grand Prè, August 30, 1755, says, ‘as to poor father Le Blanc, I shall, with your Excellency’s permission, send him to my own place.’ What prevented him from so doing, does not appear.

ment, he was taken by the Indians, and carried to a French fort, and there held in captivity four years. In a petition of the neutrals sent to Pennsylvania, to the king, it was said of him—‘Father Le Blanc was seized, confined, and brought away among the rest of the people, and his family, consisting of 20 children, and about 150 grand-children, were scattered in the different colonies. He was put on shore at New York, with only his wife and two youngest children, in an infirm state of health, from whence he joined three more of his children, at Philadelphia—where he died, without any more notice being taken of him, than any of us, notwithstanding his many years labor and deep sufferings in your majesty’s service.’

The removal of the Acadians, in the way it was effected, cannot but be considered an act of great cruelty and injustice. It was the infliction of a terrible punishment on a whole community, most of whom were innocent, for the misconduct of a part. Well has it been said, that the reasons of State, upon which it was sought to be justified, ‘were never more cheaply urged nor more odiously triumphant.’

See Halliburton’s History of Nova Scotia, and Walsh’s appeal.









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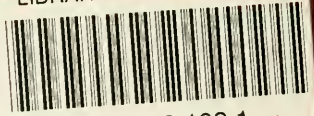
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